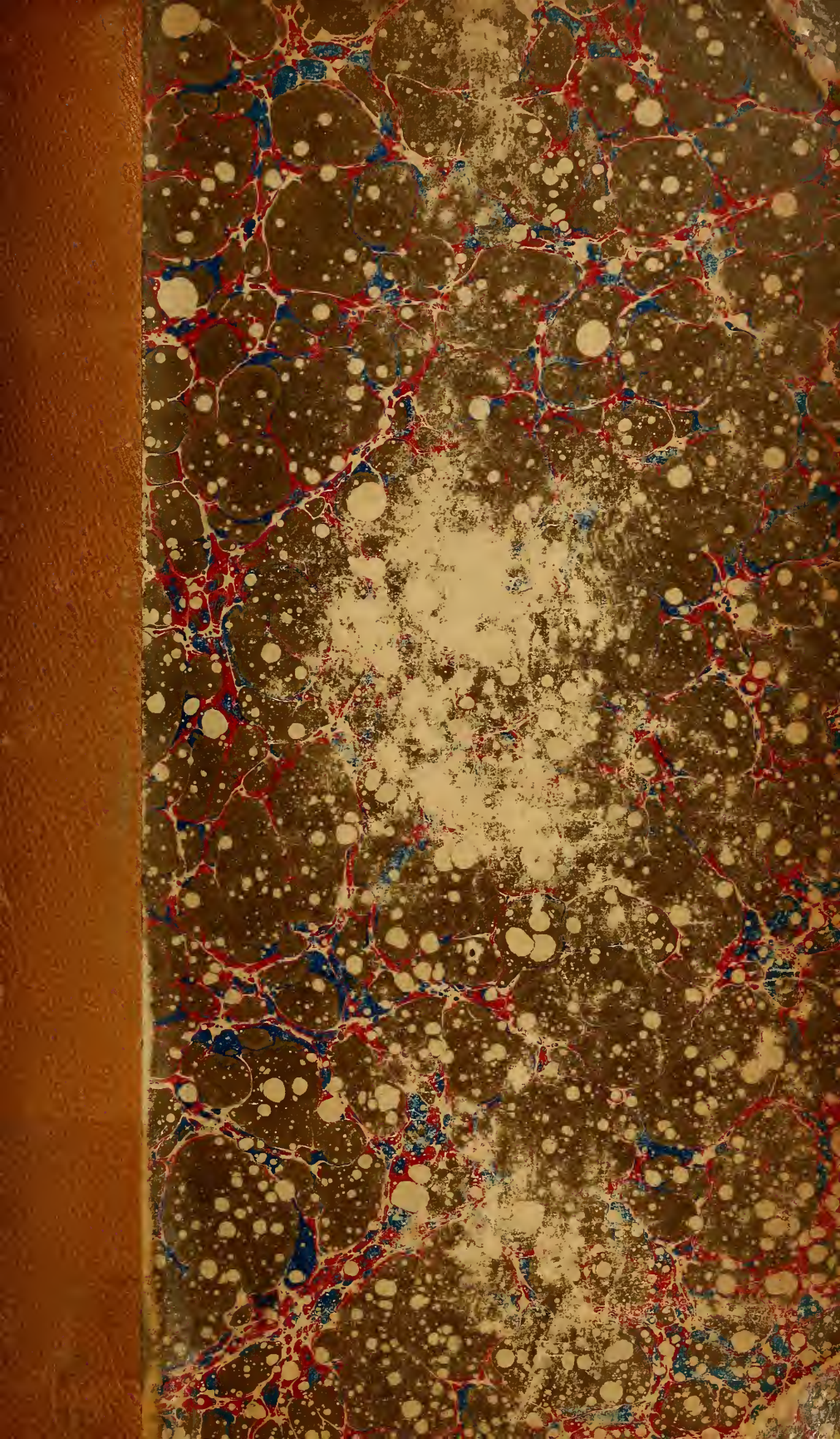




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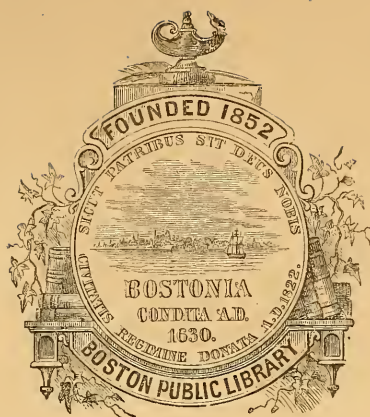


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PAMPHLETS.

Salem.

Ecclesiastical.

Vol. I.

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MEMORANDA.

CONCLUSION

OF THE

SALEM CONTROVERSY.

FROM THE SALEM GAZETTE.

SALEM—1834.



MR. CHEEVER'S PLAGIARISMS.

From the Salem Gazette, April 8, 1834.

Mr. Editor,—Instead of availing myself of my right to answer Mr. Cheever again at length, I would refer the reader to your advertising columns where his attention will be directed to the pamphlets which contain my previous replies to the articles in your paper signed "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth." They will be found to contain what appear to me to be sufficient answers to almost every thing he has since published over that much abused signature.

I have too much respect for your readers, and for myself, to traverse the same ground over and over again.

I must, however, inform them, as some may not be aware of the fact, that in Mr. Cheever's last series of communications he has reprinted, besides what he has acknowledged, a considerable part of the third volume of the *Spirit of the Pilgrims*. Four successive numbers were made up in this way, with the exception of one or two connecting paragraphs. The articles thus copied out from that printed book, were not written by Mr. Cheever, as he himself obscurely intimates; but still the same ill-fated "Lover of Cudworth and Truth" is made "to bear the burden and the shame."

☞ In the *Gazette* of Feb. 28th, for instance, there are nearly five columns, beginning with "COMMUNICATION," and ending with "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth." These are the *only* words in the whole article which Mr. Cheever wrote.—*Every syllable* between them is to be found in the "*Spirit of the Pilgrims*" vol. 3, p. 7—17! Is there an individual among your subscribers who suspected when he read it that not a single syllable of it was written by Mr. Cheever? The deception was indeed complete.

There are, in fact, no indications whatever, throughout the piece, that it is borrowed from another writer; and it bears as many marks of originality as any which have appeared. This is indeed an easy way to conduct a controversy! It enables a writer to continue to print indefinitely after he has become utterly exhausted! And if you, Mr. Editor, had thought it expedient to lend your columns to a discussion, carried on in this manner, I know not how it

could have been brought to a close until all the books in the country had been republished in the *Gazette*.

If Mr. Cheever had confined himself to original matter, and relied upon his own resources, he could not have drawn me out again; and I wish the reader to bear in mind that the few pieces I am now to submit to his perusal, are intended principally as a reply to the arguments of those authors whose productions he has republished in such a manner as to lead the great body of his readers to consider them his own. I shall avail myself of the opportunity to promote the diffusion of more correct views on some topics brought into notice in his articles. I have no disposition to prolong the discussion with a person who can condescend to such practices as he has adopted in this controversy.

In one of his pieces he thought to terrify me with the idea of a prosecution. This is a delicate point for him to introduce, and all that it is necessary for me to say in reference to it is, that if the civil guardians of society are of opinion that the seat of justice should be held sacred from outrage, he will have to answer, before the proper tribunal, for such an assault upon our highest Court as has never been committed before in Massachusetts.

It would weary your readers, and cover your columns, were I to relate, in detail, the misrepresentations, misquotations, and various literary frauds he has perpetrated in the course of the discussion. They have been continued without abatement to the close of his last pieces. I fully expected that his offences would have become the occasion of such *disciplinary* proceedings as Evangelical churches have usually not been slow to institute when any of the "brethren" or "sisters" have been guilty of indiscretion. But perhaps it is considered that their ministers can do no wrong, and are above the reach of the lay members. It was not always so in the Howard street church. But they have a pastor now who is *infallible*, and that alters the case.

Knowing the entire disapprobation with which Mr. Cheever's conduct was viewed by the orthodox community, in general, I was confident that their feelings would be so clearly made manifest, as to rescue them

from all responsibility for his proceedings, especially after he had denounced, repeatedly, in the Gazette, the course of his brethren in reference to the series of Lectures got up by the "deluded" young men of "Salem." But it seems that here too I was mistaken. Although they disapprove of his offences against truth, and of his innumerable attempts to deceive your readers, still they do not require any apology or repentance, but appear to regard them in the same light as he did the publication *as his own*, of whole columns from the New York Observer. They are merely "*unfortunate mistakes*"!!

I claim the right, therefore, of occupying the columns of the Gazette, with a view to the diffusion of what I deem correct sentiments and principles, so long as he continues to abuse the Unitarians, until his course is decidedly condemned and distinctly disavowed by the Orthodox. Then, but not till then, shall I agree in considering what he may print beneath my notice.

I shall now proceed in a very brief space to notice all that can seem to any one to require further answer.

If Mr. Cheever will but read Lardner's Credibility, B. 1. c. cxiv., he will find the following extract from Jerome's Preface to his commentary upon the Ephesians. After enumerating the Epistles of Paul, he says:

"But the Epistle, called to the Hebrews, is *not thought* to be his, because of the difference of the argument and style; but either Barnabas's, as Tertullian thought; or the Evangelist Luke's, according to some others; or Clement's, afterwards Bishop of Rome, who, as some think, being much with him, clothed and adorned Paul's sense in his own language."

He will find, if he reads the whole chapter from which he has quoted, that Jerome expresses the idea that the present epistle is a translation into Greek of what *perhaps* Paul wrote in Hebrew; he will also find that Jerome speaks in great doubt on the subject; that he affirms that the Latin churches did not in general receive the epistle as written by Paul, just as many of the Greek churches did not receive the book of Revelation; and upon the whole, if he exercises his judgment upon the evidence, as collected by Lardner, he may see cause to agree with me in coming to the conclusion that Jerome did not believe that the Epistle to the Hebrews, at least in its present dress, was the production of Paul.

In his commentary on the 48th chapter of Genesis, Luther says distinctly that he believed that Paul was not the author of this epistle. Mr. Cheever himself has quoted Calvin to the same purpose, and Origen, as holding to the opinion that it was written by another, although the ideas are Paul's! as though Paul would have needed an interpreter in writing to his own countrymen, who used his own idiom!

I do not think that my statement that Mr. Norton is sustained by "Tertullian, Origen, Jerome, Grotius, Luther and Calvin," has been at all shaken by Mr. Cheever.

I should be sorry, however, to have the impression received that I do not think most highly of this epistle. It was, no doubt, written in the apostolic age, by a person of great authority. As an "argumentum ad hominem," addressed to Jews, it is a matchless production. It is one of the strongest arguments that ever was written against the Trinity, and, more distinctly than any other book of the New Testament, states that our Lord, in his highest nature and in his prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices, is "the man Christ Jesus," one of our species, and "made like unto his brethren." And I shall ever regard with grateful veneration the sacred book to the critical study of which, more than to any other cause, I ascribe my firm belief in that precious faith which Christ taught to his followers and delivered to the saints, but which some men still "call heresy."

When Mr. Cheever disappeared from your columns, more than a fortnight ago, he had given occasion to no further reply than I have now made. What he wrote is thus answered. The writings of others, to which the signature of "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth" was attached, will receive some additional notice.

I have a word to say on the subject of controversy. Several communications have appeared in other newspapers in town, deprecating all those who "cavil at their brethren" and "calumniate" other denominations. If such language had been held by those same presses last July we should not have been troubled with this controversy. A short time since we were entertained with some extracts from a pamphlet said to have been written by a clergyman of this vicinity in which among other equally elegant remarks we are informed that "the Unitarians repeatedly have been driven

yelping from the field, with their tails between their hind legs; and so have the Orthodox!"

While I cannot subscribe to the extraordinary sentiments contained in these extracts, any more than I can approve of the taste and decency exhibited in the sentence I have quoted, and think that the writer himself would not subscribe them now—for they go to the whole extent of abandoning the pursuit of truth and the correction of error—I would express my regret at the necessity which has compelled us to protect ourselves from outrage in the columns of a newspaper. When this controversy is alluded to, in terms of reproach, by writers in other papers, it seems to me that justice requires that it should be stated that the Unitarians were driven into it by the most unmeasured and unprovoked assaults not only in the pulpit, but through the press. At any rate, let the newspapers say what they will, we wish it to be understood, once for all, that whenever and as often as, we are assailed we shall defend ourselves, and it becomes those who dislike controversy, to refuse to countenance, and refrain from applauding any attacks upon us in future.

While I am altogether willing to retire from a newspaper discussion, I must express the hope that in case any writer through either of the presses in the place, undertakes to involve me in the reproaches to which my opponent has exposed himself, some friend of truth and justice will be found to call upon that writer to point out, if he can, any instances in which I have misrepresented the truth or misquoted my authorities, or exhibited an unbecoming spirit. If such instances can be found, let them be pointed out—if they cannot be found it will be expedient for the contributors to our newspapers to be careful how they involve themselves in difficulty by attempting without evidence, and against the facts of the case, to bring upon me the reproaches which belong to another.

I know full well that it is quite a prevalent sentiment that controversy is undesirable and discreditable to those who engage in it. A quarrelsome temper, and a contentious disposition are injurious to all who are subject to them, and exceedingly disagreeable and disgusting to all who witness them. But that a zealous, and earnest discussion of important questions on all proper occasions is to be shunned and frowned upon is what I am not ready to admit. I trust that the patrons of the Gazette

are in general as much interested in the truths of religion as they are in the political debates, almost exclusively upon one topic too, with which the newspaper press has been burdened, for many months past; and I must be permitted to express my belief that the extracts upon the noblest and most important subjects, which have been presented from the wisest, greatest, and most eloquent men who ever wrote, such as Channing and Cudworth, have been as valuable and interesting to them, to say the least, as the best of our Congressional and legislative debates would have been.

In denouncing theological controversy, we ought to remember that we denounce the great champions of the reformation, and of the gospel in its purest primitive age, cast reproach upon all the prominent and most effectual benefactors of the church and the world, and speak evil of that agent to the operation of which we must, in a great degree, look for the future progress of truth and light.

I am strongly persuaded that an occasional discussion, under a controversial form, conducted with zeal and earnestness, in good humor combined with energy and strenuous fervor, would be found productive of the most beneficial effects.—At all events I hope and trust that the humblest denomination in the land will be prompt to protect itself, whenever assailed as the unitarians were by our last 4th of July orator, and to vindicate the cause committed to its care. If such assaults are instantly met and repelled they will not often be made, and the peace of society will thus be preserved from violation, and the first page of our newspapers, rescued from theological discussions, may forever be occupied by columns of advertisements, fictitious tales, and such other matters of interest and moment as an intelligent and religious community may prefer.

It is quite remarkable, and, if connected with any other signature, it would be surprising, that the principle contended for by the writer in the "Spirit of the Pilgrims" is directly hostile to that maintained by Mr. Cheever. The latter rests the charge that we are infidels chiefly upon our rejection of his views of the person of the Saviour; while the former asserts that he "calls no man an infidel" for this reason!

Under other circumstances I should perhaps, have felt called to refute the arguments, as I presume he considered them, of this writer in the "Spirit of the Pil-

grims." But after the recent demonstrations of public sentiment "in Salem" I am satisfied that such refutation is not needed. When the Course of Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity was first proposed, and it was ascertained that the Young Men had determined to invite *all* the ministers in town to cooperate in carrying into effect their laudable purpose, Mr. Cheever came out with the following declaration in the newspapers. "It is *very true* that *Evangelical* ministers of the Gospel of Christ *CANNOT consistently with their belief*, meet the preachers of another Gospel as ministers, whether to PREACH THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY or to urge its reception in the heart. It would be an *UNHOLY* amalgamation." In the face of this impertinent and unbecoming denunciation uttered as it was in advance, and repeated as it has been since, the other orthodox ministers and societies of Salem *have* cooperated in the arrangements of the Young Men, have met the preachers of the several denominations as fellow champions of christianity, and thus the clear and *imperative* decision of public opinion has been unequivocally and finally pronounced.—Why continue to argue the point after the verdict has been rendered and recorded?

"In such a place as Salem" it will be in vain to attempt to disseminate intolerant, persecuting, and inquisitorial principles. For instance, the Society of Friends, every body knows, is very respectable in this place, and the booksellers' shops exhibit evidence that converts may be made to their cause. Now, suppose that Mr. Cheever's Presbyterian brother, Rev. Dr. Cox of New York, who has recently printed a book entitled "Quakerism not Christianity," should be translated to Salem, and should avail himself of the next "religious celebration of the 4th of July" to reiterate his outrageous abuse of the followers of Penn and Barclay, and should pronounce them "a community of infidels" and their system "another gospel," and should call their peculiar garb a mere WRAPRASCAL costume—he would have no better success than Mr Cheever has had. He would not lessen, but on the contrary, would probably increase the influence of the persecuted Friends.

The people in this place are sufficiently enlightened to know that the principles of christian liberty require that, while sects and individuals are left free to believe and to preach as they see fit, all attempts to reproach and asperse and vilify each other

should be effectually frowned down. If any man undertakes to persuade them that all except those of his own denomination and creed, are infidels, they will answer him, in a tone not to be misunderstood, and however often he might advertise to preach from Gal. v. 11, they would still rebuke him in the language of "John Howe."

"And now, sir, if that be *your* conscience, that supposing there be never *so many thousands* in a christian nation that cannot worship God in *your way*, you would have them *paganized*, made as Heathens, and publicans, God bless me from *your conscience*!"

The satisfaction and triumph with which a certain judicial decision pronounced in a subordinate court in England has been received by such persons as Mr. Cheever, convinces "the people of Salem" that another sentiment of John Howe already quoted in this discussion, should be written indelibly upon their minds.

"To judge other men's consciences is of so near a kin to GOVERNING them, that they who can allow themselves to do the former, *want only power*, not will or inclination, to offer at the other too."

In a previous communication, I expressed my conviction that it would be evident to a careful reader of the "4th of July address" (the production which contains "eight pages" of such "unanswerable arguments" as "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth," in the overflow of his boundless admiration for its author, has pronounced them) that Mr. Cheever contemplates with pleasure the prospect of the *establishment of orthodoxy by law* in this country. That conviction must, by this time, have been carried to every man's mind.

☞ In the Gazette of March 14, (as he has since found it necessary to acknowledge) Mr. Cheever published *as his own*, the principal part of a letter written in London by a hired correspondent of the New York Observer, and *printed in that paper a few weeks before!* That writer speaks of his "native state" of Massachusetts, and in referring to England, where he was composing his letter, speaks of it as 'here' and of America as 'there,' *italicising* the terms to make them more distinctive.—Mr. Cheever reprints it, *italics* and all, without reference or acknowledgment, without note or comment, and writes the same unblushing signature, "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth," at the bottom of the whole! The writer in London, dead to every sentiment, recreant to every princi-

ple of patriotism, pours out the most scurrilous abuse upon his "native state," vilifies its tribunals, and eulogizes the institutions of Great Britain at the expense of those of America. He looks on with delight while he sees an attempt making to induce the judicial branch of a government, *where orthodoxy is established by law*, to trample upon the rights of conscience; and rejoices to think that the sword of the magistrate will do, what argument, aided by all the powers of bigotry cannot do, deprive unitarians of the title and of the rights of christians—and Mr. Cheever rejoices with him, adopts all his sentiments, and swells the chorus of his denunciations of America, and of his panegyric upon the union of church and state in England.

It is high time for the friends of religious liberty to *fix their eyes upon those persons* who rejoice in seeing judicial tribunals sitting in judgment upon religious doctrines, and upon the right of individuals or sects to the christian name. **THEY MUST BE WATCHED** with the utmost vigilance—Let the people of Massachusetts, of *New Jersey*, and of the whole country, be on their guard.

This vilifier of his "native state" shows with what an entire want of principle he writes, by the gross and shameless inconsistencies of his sentiments. While he is aspersing the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, and charging it with *corruption* and *pollution*, and most falsely insinuating that in its solemn decisions it has been biassed by sectarian prejudices, he is all the time rejoicing to relate and detail the outrageous bigotry which disgraced the bar, and openly invaded the bench of the British Vice Chancellor's Court.

In reference to the decisions of the Massachusetts Supreme Court it is well known to Mr. Cheever that they have no bearing whatever upon theological tenets or parties, and that they are sustained by the orthodox Judge upon that bench as decidedly as by his colleagues. In order to show your readers what a gross attempt has been made to deceive them in this matter, I hope, Mr. Editor, that you may make it convenient to reprint the judgment of the whole court, as pronounced by Chief Justice Shaw, at Worcester, a year or two since.

I shall not notice particularly the decision of the English Vice Chancellor. When the case shall have been carried up to the place of final appeal, and the whole matter is before the public, some competent person

will, I hope, favor your readers with an account of it. The decision of the Vice Chancellor, was not so ludicrous, after all, as some have represented. He expressly declined to argue or to adjudge the question whether Unitarians are Christians. He has exposed himself sufficiently to the ridicule of the world, but Sir *Launcelot Shadwell* has not pronounced Sir ISAAC NEWTON, and JOHN LOCKE, and JOHN MILTON, not to mention "RALPH CUDWORTH" and Dr. CHANNING, *Infidels*.

This correspondent of the New York Observer almost equals Mr. Cheever in the hardihood and folly of his assertions. He speaks of Sir Edward Sugden as a "man of profound and *varied* learning, of deep science of men and things, and of *those great subjects*, RELIGION AMONG THE CHIEF, *which exercise men's minds*," &c.—Now to show how audaciously false and supremely ridiculous this is, I would refer the reader to "the New Monthly Magazine" for Feb. 1831, where he will find an excellent description of Sir Edward. While the writer compliments him for his great legal attainments, and places him above all competition in one particular branch of the law, he states that he is a mere "precedent lawyer," that he has no perception of the principles of abstract morality when they come into conflict with the arbitrary rules of practice, and that although deeply read in his profession, his "mind NEVER, by accident or design, took an excursion in any other direction."

Sir Edward Sugden is well known as a most bigoted anti-reformer and borough-monger; and to complete the measure of the imposition practised upon us by the persons who have brought this case to the notice of your readers, the arguments of counsel (and of such a counsellor!) have been presented as the decisions of the bench; and Mr. Cheever, when, after the thing was discovered, he apologized for his "unfortunate mistake" in "omitting" to state that the article was not his own, described it as an account of the "trial of the unitarians," whereas the judge declared that it was *not* "a trial of the unitarians"!

It is very observable that Lady Hewley belonged to a sect which is utterly hostile to creeds; and the outcry raised about her charities, is just as absurd and unfounded as that which has been kept up for some time among us respecting the Hollis funds, when it is well known that Hollis was opposed to creeds, and committed the trust of

drawing up the articles which accompanied and determined the design and purpose of his donations to several clergymen who had just before distinguished themselves by their opposition to creeds, and one of whom was a *humanitarian Unitarian*! Are the men, who thus strive to mislead and misrepresent, deliberately dishonest, or are they incorrigibly stupid?

Passing from the consideration of the patriotic gentleman who, sitting under the shadow of royalty, and within the precincts of a tribunal erected to guard and preserve a church established by law, regales the readers of the New York Observer with such unparelled abuse of his native land; I would, once more, return to Mr. Cheever, and express my surprise and astonishment that that he can have become so lost to every sense of literary honor as to attach his well known signature to whole columns and pages of which others are the authors. Did Mr. Cheever suppose that he could venture with safety, "in such a place as Salem" to reprint from published volumes entire articles, *written by other men*, and by subscribing "a Lover of Cudworth and Truth" deceive us into the idea that he was intimately acquainted with English law as well as German theology.

I cannot deny myself the pleasure of again expressing the grateful satisfaction with which we, of the unitarian denomination, regard the decisive evidence which has been given, that the spirit of christian charity so far prevails in this ancient town, consecrated by the associations connected with its sacred name to the cause of peace, that such attempts to array the several denominations against each other in deadly strife, as Mr. Cheever and his partisans have made, cannot succeed. I have repeatedly uttered the sentiments of christian charity and good will, which I know I feel, towards my orthodox fellow citizens. It is my sincere and earnest desire that such sentiments may be cherished by the whole denomination which it has been my lot to represent and vindicate in this controversy. Let us alone to the enjoyment of that liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and we shall hold ourselves bound to protect all others in the enjoyment of the same, by whatever name they may be called, or whatever doctrines they may profess to derive from that which is our only rule of faith, the word of God. Why may not christians, however much they may differ in sentiment, respect each

other's characters, do justice to each other's claims to a favorable estimation in the community, protect each other from outrage, and live together in civility, charity, and love?

In the remaining articles, after briefly noticing the arguments of the writer in the Spirit of the Pilgrims, from whom Mr. Cheever has borrowed four of his last pieces, I shall confine myself to the discussion of the subject of INSPIRATION, upon which the whole cause of orthodoxy has been made to depend. As I shall only refer to Mr. Cheever incidentally in the course of that discussion, it will be proper to take my final leave of him here.

If he had reprinted in the Gazette, what he has published elsewhere in reference to Dr. Priestley, I should have felt bound to quote, among other panegyrics, the splendid eulogium pronounced upon that great and good man by the immortal Cuvier, which would have placed in no enviable light the declaration recently made in another quarter, that Priestley was '*spoiled as a philosopher*.' But as he has refrained, I shall do no more than relate the following anecdote.

The reader, remembers perhaps, that the writer in the Spirit of the Pilgrims, whose productions have recently appeared in the Salem Gazette, under the signature of "*A Lover of Cudworth and Truth*," refers to a pamphlet written by Priestley against a certain Mr. Burn. This Mr. Burn was active in inflaming the ignorant and bigoted multitude against Priestley, and in driving them into that state of violence which resulted in the Birmingham riots.

In the year 1825, at a public celebration in Birmingham, there was a remarkable effusion and manifestation of charity and good will. A clergyman of the established church complimented the dissenting ministers. The dissenters expressed the most friendly feelings towards the catholics, who, in turn, responded to all the liberal sentiments that had been uttered. At length an aged and venerable clergyman of the Presbyterian church, was seen to rise. He commanded the most respectful silence from the company. Every eye was suffused with tears, and every bosom swelled with admiration as he spoke. He rose, he said, to discharge a duty, without which, his mind and heart could not rest at ease. It was this same Mr. Burn. And there, in the presence of that great assembly he generously retracted the abuse which thirty five years before he had uttered against the man of whom his country was not worthy. It was a most interesting scene. The following was a part of the address of the excellent and venerable old man.

"In the school of christianity they were taught that the man who was acting in accordance with the *spirit* of the gospel, was deserving the friendship of his christian brethren, however different their sentiments might be. That church to which he belonged inculcated feelings of charity to all mankind, and though there might be things in which they differed,

they had no prerogative to assume the right of directing the consciences of others.

"He could only say, that whatever might have been the defects of his own conduct in the early periods of his life, he now felt himself better established in the principles of his religion than at any former period; yet had he to live his past life over again, he should have to correct the asperity of feelings and expressions which it was his misfortune to use in his controversies with a late respectable and highly talented individual, Dr. Priestley."

In parting with Mr. Cheever, I would most sincerely express the hope that he may reach a like venerable age with the Presbyterian minister of Birmingham; and that time, and reflection, and experience, and religion, may produce upon him the same effect; that long be-

fore the lapse of thirty-five years, he also may become "better established in the principles of his religion" and so well instructed "in the school of Christianity" as to learn that he has "no prerogative to assume the right of directing the consciences of others"; that he may be enlightened to discern the folly and unchristian arrogance of his present course; that his heart may be touched with regret and penitence, and that he may have the magnanimity to retract the calumnies he has uttered not only against Dr. Priestley, but against entire classes of his own fellow-Christians, fellow-citizens, and neighbors—of whose views he is ignorant, of whose feelings and motives he is not the judge, and with whose moral, intellectual and religious characters he had no call to meddle.

UNITARIAN.

From the Salem Gazette, April 11, 1834.

Mr. Editor,—While I do not intend to make a formal reply to the writer in the *Spirit of the Pilgrims* any more than to Mr. Cheever, I cannot refrain from repeating his argument. It is too curious a specimen of logic to pass unnoticed. It is all contained in the two following syllogisms.

The first is this—

American Unitarians call certain German writers, who deny the miracles, Deists.

American Unitarians believe in the miracles of the New Testament—Therefore

American Unitarians are Deists.

Before I proceed any further I must remark upon the strange sources from which Mr. Cheever and the writer in the *Spirit of the Pilgrims* draw their theological facts and illustrations. The former quotes Edmund Burke, Richard H. Dana, Coleridge, and *Eugene Aram*, as theological authorities, and the latter determines the claims of American Unitarians to the title of Christians, by citations from the theological literature of Germany, a country where those who profess Christianity and deny the miracles are called *Rationalists*! and where the *Orthodox*, *Trinitarian*, or *Evangelical* party are, if we may credit Mr. Dwight, all *Unitarists*!

When my opponents, for it will not do to speak of them any longer in the singular number, sometimes quote poetry, passage upon passage, in one article, as though they had compiled a *Common Place Book*, and in the next entertain us with whole columns, made musical and harmonious to the ear by such names as *Bretschneider*, *Wegscheider*,

Steinbart, *Krug*, *Thiess*, *Schmidt*, *Rohr*, *Henke*, and *Heinrichs*, I cannot but sympathize with old Dr. Eachard, who, in his celebrated work on the "Contempt of the Clergy," complained so loudly of those preachers who must "needs bring in twenty poets and philosophers (if they can catch them) into an hour's talk" and not satisfied with quoting *Greek* and *Latin* in their common discourses "must swagger also over their poor parishioners with the dreadful *Hebrew* itself, with their *Ben-Israels*, *Ben-Manasses*, and many more *Bens* that they are intimately acquainted with."

Surely there is nothing in all the tribe of Benjamin—in the whole catalogue of Jewish Doctors—so "dreadful" to the ear or eye of a judicious reader, whether learned or unlearned, as the *German* names with which young theologians, of a certain school, are of late accustomed to "swagger over" their readers.

Before dismissing the consideration of the German theologians, for whose *sentiments* we have no great respect, and for the prevalence of which sentiments, in this country, we are not responsible, I would offer one remark upon the citations which have been made from American Unitarians to shew that we consider the *Rationalists* of Germany, *Infidels*. As no one pretends to rely upon the quotations of "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth" it is not necessary to refer to the passages he professes to extract. I can only say that if any Unitarian writers have accused, of infidelity, other writers who profess, and with apparent sincerity, a Christian faith, they have done very wrong, and I shall not attempt to justify them. The

only test we have a right to employ is an *apparently sincere profession*, and whoever, in the face of such profession, denies the christian name, violates the great protestant rule, and the principles of charity and liberty.

The other syllogism is this—

Unitarian christians profess a belief in christianity.

Deists have professed a belief in christianity!—Therefore

Unitarian christians are Deists.

But upon looking at the quotations my opponents have made from the deistical writers it seems that they actually professed a belief in *orthodoxy*. For instance Shaftesbury declared himself “a VERY ORTHODOX believer,” insisting “*that he faithfully embraced the holy mysteries of our religion, notwithstanding their amazing depth.*” Several of the writers cited were communicants in the Established English Church, and almost all of them, like Hobbes, thought that it was “with the mysteries of our Religion as with wholesome *pills* for the sick, which *swallowed whole*, have the virtue to cure; but chewed, are for the most part cast up again without effect.”

The above syllogism of Messrs. “A Lover of Cudworth and Truth,” (“for they are many”) faithfully presented and logically stated stands thus—

Evangelical christians profess a belief in orthodoxy.

Infidel writers have professed a belief in orthodoxy—Therefore

Evangelical christians are Infidels!

Sir Jonah Barrington in his “Personal Sketches” relates an anecdote, illustrative of his countrymen of the Emerald Isle, which as it seems to be in point, I will repeat.

A laborer, accompanied by one of his associates, was returning from the field in which he had been engaged in mowing.—He had swung his scythe over his head, the handle projecting in front, and the blade extended behind his neck and beyond his right shoulder. As he walked along he saw an animal which he wished to kill. Grasping the handle of his scythe, he propelled it with the force of both arms. Whether he succeeded in destroying the inoffensive animal, we are not informed—but so violent and sudden was the thrust, that his own

head and the ear of his companion were brought to the ground.

This species of practical Hibernian logic is not original, therefore, with “A Lover of Cudworth and Truth.” They are not the first persons, who in aiming at others have decapitated themselves and cropt their friends!

Your readers need not to be reminded of the very abusive and violent manner in which Mr Cheever has assailed the Unitarians in general, and one gentleman in particular, with respect to their views on the difficult subject of INSPIRATION. I have already stated that the principal difference on this point between us and such persons as Mr Cheever, is this—They believe that the pens of the scriptural writers were constantly guided by the divine spirit, superintending every motion of their fingers, and dictating every syllable—We believe that, while the sacred authors were illuminated in reference to the great doctrines of revelation by the divine spirit, they were guided by their natural faculties in constructing their sentences and arranging the order of their topics.—This relieves the religion of all difficulty arising from ungrammatical or inaccurate expressions, or from variations in the manner of relating events, or recording discourses. Then, moreover, we believe that, where the sacred writers declare that they depend upon other sources than inspiration for the accuracy of their narratives, we consider ourselves bound to take them at their word, and not to insist upon attaching to their compositions a different character from that which they themselves claim for them. Luke, for instance, in the preface to his gospel, speaks of “the things which are most surely believed among us, *even as they delivered them* unto us, which from the beginning were eye witnesses and ministers of the word.” We cannot but consider that a distinction ought to be made between what was written, upon the ground of such authority, and what was written professedly upon the ground of direct illumination, as is the case in respect to much that Paul has declared and recorded.

So also the gospel of Mark must be considered as claiming an authority founded upon a basis entirely different from that of inspiration. In the 2. Peter, I. 15 that apostle uses the following language. “I will endeavour that ye may be able, after

my decease, to have these things always in remembrance." The early records of ecclesiastical history inform us that Peter carried his intention into effect. His companion, Mark, prepared "a short gospel," as Jerome calls it, and it received the benefit of the revision, correction, and sanction of Peter himself. Now if Mark wrote his gospel, in the first instance as some persons still require us to believe that he did, by the constant superintendence of the Holy Spirit, that is, with a *plenary inspiration*, the task of *revision* and *correction* undertaken by Peter, must have been as difficult as it was superfluous.

But this process of amending and revising what has been written by the infallible guidance of the spirit, has been attempted in a more recent period. Edward VI of England appointed thirteen of the most eminent ecclesiastical dignitaries to draw up a book of Common Prayer, add when their work was finished it was enjoined upon all the people by an Act of Parliament, which Act declared that the book had been composed "by the aid of the Holy Ghost!" Still notwithstanding this declaration, the same Parliament have altered, amended, and corrected that "Common Prayer Book" *five or six times* since!

The doctrine of *PLENARY* inspiration, however, is susceptible of a very easy and brief refutation—If it be true, as we have been told, that all the exciting controversies of the church have been resolved into the question whether every word and syllable of the bible was composed under the superintendence of the infallible spirit of God, we may confidently expect speedily to witness the dawning of an era of peace, and unity, and agreement throughout the church—There are several places in the scriptures themselves which afford the means of settling this question to the satisfaction of every intelligent enquirer.

None, however, are more to the point than the *discrepancies* in the evangelical accounts of the occurrences of the morning of the resurrection. And these accounts have fortunately been brought to the particular notice of the public in a recent communication signed "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth." While the young men of this community were turning their attention to the evidences of christianity, and while their minds were occupied with the arguments by which the great fact of the Resurrection is proved,—placed before them, as those arguments have been, with a clearness

and power of eloquence which they will not soon forget,—it was indeed an extraordinary proceeding for a minister of the gospel to display to them the discrepancies in the accounts which the evangelists have given of that event.

An article in the last January number of the Christian Examiner was made the occasion of bringing this subject to the notice of your readers. That article was written, as every one who reads it must perceive, by a person whose mind and heart are entirely devoted to the cause of the Saviour, whose genius is hallowed and whose eloquence is sanctified by a holy enthusiasm in his character and gospel, and whose object in composing the treatise, which has been so perversely misrepresented, was to confirm the evidences of christianity by removing the difficulties which the sceptic has attempted to raise, and by illustrating still more clearly the marks of veracity impressed upon the gospel narratives.

I must pause, one moment, to consider the practice, our opponents have recently adopted, of exploring our literature for the purpose of selecting passages which can be made to reflect reproach upon our cause. It is a base and dishonorable method of controversy, and can only be suggested by the most unworthy motives. And it is singularly unfair and inconclusive when employed as a means of annoying and injuring us.

As the unitarian denomination has no creed but the Bible, and proclaims the liberty, and urges the duty, of free inquiry into the revelation which it contains, no one person is responsible for the speculations of another; and I trust that we shall never permit ourselves to be driven, by the pains which have recently been taken to collect, for the purpose of bringing odium upon liberal christians in general, every untenable or unsound expression that can be found in our literature, into the adoption of any measures that would tend to restrain the exercise and expression of individual opinion. The cry, which is raised against us, on account of the *diverſities*, and in some instances, no doubt, the extravagances of our writers—for *we* do not pretend to be *infallible*, to "*know*" what mere mortals can only *believe*—is the same that was uttered by ignorant and timid bigots at the time of the Reformation. It was this clamor which checked the progress of that glorious movement—extinguished the rising light of a most bright and hopeful morning in the dark clouds of superstition and intolerance—tore the bible from the hands of the people just as they were beginning to draw the heavenly wisdom from its pages, and placed gloomy and unintelligible creeds in its stead—erected an Inquisition in Geneva, and stamped upon the otherwise illustrious name of Calvin, a reproach which is rivalled only by the infamy of Dominic.

Let malice and bigotry continue to explore the pages of our writings with their

most quickened and searching penetration. To use their own expressions—let them drive their “scavenger’s carts” and “hand wagons” through every street and lane, and gather whatever it may please them to collect. It is their chosen occupation. Let us neither forbid nor heed them. At all events, let us not be induced to rob them of their employment by putting a check upon the freedom of inquiry, of the press, or of speech. *Let the name of every writer in our periodicals be attached to his own productions.* Let the responsibility of sentiments be thus confined to the individual who utters them. And if the gospel cannot abide the issue of perfectly unrestrained discussion, let him, who thinks so, come forth at once, and avow himself an *Infidel*, as he really is.

While the course of our opponents, in industriously gathering up the careless expressions and unsound positions of our writers, and in maliciously perverting and misrepresenting them, is not permitted to prevent or diminish the free action of any individual mind, and the fearless publication of sincere opinions, it must necessarily have the very desirable effect of rendering us more careful to express ourselves so as to be fairly understood. It becomes us, then, while we grieve at the unworthiness of the motives which actuate our opponents, to endeavor to derive to ourselves the only advantage that can result from the odious work in which they are so laboriously engaged. While such men as Mr. Cheever continue to misquote, misrepresent, and collect matter of reproach, we may well proclaim to all unitarian authors, the same caution which Burns uttered to his “brither Scots,

“Frae Maidenkirke to Johnny Groats;

If there’s a hole in a’ your coats,

I rede you tent it:

A chiel’s amang ye, *taking notes,*

And he will prent it.”

Let us return to the consideration of the evangelical accounts of the morning of the Resurrection. They afford the best possible illustration of the propriety and necessity of the ground we take on the subject of inspiration. They prove that the kind of inspiration which some most violently contend for, cannot be ascribed to the whole Bible, and they convince us that it would not be expedient or desirable to seek to maintain such a view in all cases.

While we cannot but reprobate Mr. Cheever’s course in presenting these accounts to the particular attention of the public without accompanying them with such explanatory remarks as would have shown that the variations they contain tend rather to confirm than weaken the cause of revelation, we cannot sufficiently express our satisfaction that he has himself suggested the kind of reasoning by which his own absurd notion of *plenary* inspiration may most effectually be exposed and refuted. By a remarkable simplicity or fatality he has done the same service to his opponent throughout the whole discussion.

It was generally spoken of, as a most auspicious coincidence, that while Mr. Cheever’s article on the subject of the Resurrection, the object of which was to represent us as infidels, was standing in type, waiting to be printed off, the young men of Salem were called to listen to a discourse from one of the Unitarian ministers of the place, in which the evidences of christianity, as based upon the fact that “Christ has indeed risen,” were urged with a force not to be resisted.

Little however did Mr. Cheever know the suicidal nature of the step he was taking when he carried that article to the press! Having been driven from his former positions, he had just before fled for refuge behind the “Spirit of the Pilgrims,” and had committed all the fortunes of his cause to a final issue on the ground, assumed by a writer in that journal. That ground was, that we are infidels because we do not believe that every *word* in the Bible was immediately dictated by the spirit of God, superintending the writers, and constantly guiding their pens.

Mr. Cheever, your readers remember, has pretended to be very conversant with the terms of the military art. He has talked about the “orthodox camp,” “General” Cudworth, “ragged regiment,” “great guns,” “unfurled flags,” &c

But he really knows no more about military matters than he does about the “position in the theological world” of the *nineteen* authors whom he has quoted, as he himself informs us, in the course of his “various publications.” It was in an evil hour that the “Spirit of the Pilgrims” opened its gates to receive him. The very first thing he did after getting behind the ram-

parts of that castle of bigotry was to spring a mine which blew the entire "fortification" sky high.

Well might the writer, whose pieces he reprinted in the Gazette, *under his own signature*, and well might others who have espoused the same hopeless cause, exclaim "save me from my friends." In bringing into this controversy the evangelical accounts of the occurrences on the morning of the Resurrection, he has given me an opportunity of demonstrating that the views of Inspiration advocated with so much arrogance and intolerance by him, by the "Spirit of the Pilgrims," and by others, are absolutely untenable, and that ours are necessary to the maintenance of the religion of the New Testament.

For nothing is clearer, or more certain, than that these accounts *can be perfectly harmonized* if they were dictated by such an inspiration, as that for which our orthodox opponents contend. The spirit of God cannot be supposed to have suggested one account to one Evangelist, and a different and discordant one to another. If then these accounts can be brought into perfect harmony, let it be done. But if it cannot be done, let us hear no more of such views of inspiration as Mr Cheever insists upon, let him acknowledge that our principles are correct, and let him apologise, with sincerity of contrition and self reproach, for the unjust and calumnious aspersions he has cast upon the whole body of the Unitarians.

The attempt to harmonize them has often been made. No one can have the least acquaintance with theology without knowing how much has been written upon this subject and what a difficult point it has ever been considered. It is, indeed, only by our principles of interpretation that the difficulty can be removed. Osiander, Calvin, Gilbert West, Clark, Doddridge, Macknight, Benson, Griesbach, Chandler, the Editors of Goadby's Bible, Lardner, Priestley, Newcome, Carpenter, and many others have labored most perseveringly and ingeniously upon it. But, they have never been able, without rendering the course of events too complex, or without transposing the passages, as Calvin does, (a most violent and arbitrary expedient) to make out any thing like a case; and have seldom satisfied themselves, much less their readers.

Dr Carpenter's explanation is upon the whole, as might be expected, the best that has been made. But it labors particularly in the point to which I am about to direct the attention of the reader. It is incredible that the whole company of the women should have seen the Lord as early as seven o'clock that morning, and that none of them should have communicated the intelligence to the disciples before the 'two' started for Emmaus, which must have been at least five hours after, that is, not before high noon.

Let the reader then open his New Testament and examine the following passages:—Matthew xxviii. 1—10; Mark xvi. 1—14; Luke xxiv. 1—36; John xx. 1—19.

Upon a careful examination of these accounts, the candid and intelligent reader will perceive in them, it is probable, a *strong appearance* of discrepancy and contradiction. He will see cause to conclude that the writers did not attempt to make them square with each other, and that they actually entertained different views of the events they related, and particularly of the order of their occurrence. He will perceive, for instance, that the statement, made in verses 9 and 10 of the passage from Matthew, that Jesus appeared to the *women* as they returned from the sepulchre, seems to be inconsistent with the other accounts, inasmuch as it is declared in the 23d verse of the passage from Luke, that it was "a vision of angels," and not the Saviour himself, that was seen by the "women"; and as it is declared, in the 9th verse from Mark, that Jesus "appeared *first* to Mary Magdalene," which appearance to her, John informs us, in the 10th and 11th verses of the passage taken from him, did not take place until *long after* the other women had returned from the tomb. Mark also gives us to understand, that his next appearance, "after that" to Mary Magdalene, was to the two who were walking to Emmaus, and who, it appears from Luke, could not have left Jerusalem, until the *afternoon*. And it is very clear that John conveys the impression that the memorable distinction of being the *first* to behold the risen Lord was understood to belong to Mary Magdalene, and that *she alone* of the whole company of faithful females, was permitted to see him, face to face, on that glorious morning.

But the passage from Matthew, now under consideration, is not only apparently inconsis-

tent with the other accounts in these particulars, but renders it exceedingly difficult to explain the incredulity which continued to possess the minds of the disciples, during that whole day, until Jesus, at its close, appeared "in the midst of them" If not only Mary Magdalene, but all the women, had seen the Lord, and conversed with him, it was truly wonderful that their united testimony was not credited. But if, in point of fact, none but Mary had actually seen him, and if her declaration, to that effect, remained uncorroborated by that of any of the other women, or of Peter or John, who also visited the sepulchre, and in company with her too, it becomes perfectly natural, as will be shown more fully before I have done, that "when they heard that he was alive and had been seen of her, [they] believed not."

But besides this there are many other apparent discrepancies in these accounts, and every well read theologian is aware that they have arrested the attention of unbelievers, and engaged the most patient and laborious scrutiny of learned and ingenious christian writers.--The article in the January number of the *Examiner*, which has been so strangely brought before the public by "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth," was written for the purpose of reconciling and explaining these discrepancies, particularly that which relates to the "Angel or Angels who were seen in the sepulchre. But with a perversity, which I will venture to affirm has never been paralleled, it has been misrepresented, as composed with a view to destroy the authority of the Evangelists as inspired men, and faithful historians.

But upon our principles, these discrepancies need not to be removed, for they enhance the value of the records of our faith, inasmuch as they actually confirm the veracity of the evangelists. We believe that, in relating facts within the reach of their own observation, or on the testimony of others who observed them—that is, where the ordinary means of knowledge would suffice—the sacred writers did not need or receive divine assistance. In such cases, we listen to them as to honest intelligent witnesses on the stand, and look upon incidental discrepancies in their testimony, as corroborative rather than discreditable. With Paley, we expect to find "*substantial truth under circumstantial variety*;" and we also think with him, that "apparent or *real inconsistencies* (if such there be) in the relation of the *circumstances* can no way weaken the credibility of the *fact itself*."

Bishop Watson in stating with apparent approbation, the opinion entertained upon this subject by the ablest orthodox writers, whom he names, expressed precisely the views held by Unitarians. "The inspiration of the Apostles consisted in their having had the scheme of the gospel communicated to them from heaven; in their having retained, to the end of their lives, the memory of what had

been thus communicated to them; in their having committed to writing, *by the use of their natural faculties*, what they remembered."

We ought not to expect in these accounts the accuracy and precise similarity, belonging to the language of inspiration, because we are expressly informed that the writers derived their knowledge from other sources—from the hurried reports of a large number of amazed and affrighted women. Luke says, "It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the Apostles."

Michaelis, who had himself labored to reconcile these accounts, acknowledges that, "notwithstanding all the pains that had been taken" by himself and others in this matter, he is "of opinion that their endeavors had not been so successful as was commonly believed"; and Bishop Watson, in republishing Gilbert West's book on the subject, evinces most clearly that the explanation given by that author, although extremely learned and ingenious, was not altogether satisfactory to his mind; and he makes the following candid and judicious admission, which I respectfully recommend to whom it may concern. "If the Evangelists do really differ from each other in their accounts of the resurrection of Jesus, it is a proof that they did not write in concert, were not combined to impose a fable on the world; and it is proof also, that what they wrote was *not inspired* in the manner which *some*, with MORE *PITY THAN JUDGMENT*, have supposed it to have been."!

In my next article I shall present such an explanation of these contradictions, as will more fully illustrate our principles of interpretation, demonstrate the veracity and naturalness of the sacred historians, and thus tend to confirm the faith of my readers. I shall make free use of an article, on the subject, of which I am the author, published in 1823 in the *Christian Disciple*.

As a collateral illustration of the importance of our views, and of the fatal tendency of the doctrine of plenary inspiration, I would exhibit in a few words the scriptural argument for the *PERPETUITY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER*.

In Matt. xvi. 28, our Lord says, "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." And in John xxi. 22, he is represented as saying to Peter, in reference to John, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

From these passages it is certain that the Lord, meant by the expression of his 'coming' something that happened during the lifetime of John and others of that generation.—He meant, it is probable, "his *inward* coming and appearance", as Robert Barclay and others interpret him.

But Paul in describing the institution of the Lord's Supper, 1, Cor. xi. 26, has these words,

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death *till he come*,"

Now if Paul meant by the '*coming*' of Christ, what the Saviour himself meant, this passage proves that, in his estimation, the observance of the Supper was to continue only during that generation, and *until*, at the destruction of Jerusalem, the true nature of the Messiah's kingdom would be made manifest, and his inward coming and appearance take place. And the Quakers, insisting that Paul must have understood the expression in the same sense with the Saviour, argue, most justly from such premises, that Paul has declared that the Supper was only intended to be observed in that primitive age.

But we believe that Paul attached a different sense to this language—that he understood the Saviour as authorizing the expectation of his personal reappearance on earth, within the lifetime of some of his followers. With this expectation there was also connected the opinion that after the Saviour's appearance, death would have no more power over his followers. Instead of adducing at length the Scriptural evidence of the existence of these erroneous views at that time, I would merely refer to the verse, immediately succeeding that already quoted from the last chapter of John: "Then went this saying abroad among the brethren that that disciple should not die"; that is, because the Saviour intimated respecting John, that he would tarry until *he came*, they concluded that the Lord would reappear personally during John's lifetime, and that then John would never die. Calvin expressly states that these erroneous opinions prevailed 'among the Apostles themselves.'

We think, therefore, that Paul expressed this idea—"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death, till he personally reappears among his followers, and then, of course, you will no longer need these memorials of him."

If this was the sentiment Paul intended to convey, it brings the decisive weight of his au-

thority in favor of the perpetuity of the Lord's Supper, through every age of the Church on earth; for we know that we cannot expect to meet the Saviour personally, until we join his Church in Heaven: and that, of course, while here below, we shall always stand in need of these memorials of him.

We now see that if Paul used the language, under consideration, in the same sense as the Saviour, that is, if he interpreted that language correctly, which it is necessary to allow, if the doctrine, of PLENARY inspiration be established, his authority is hostile to the continued observance of the Lord's Supper. If, however, it be admitted, as we hold, that he misunderstood the language of the Saviour on this point, then we can prove by him that it was intended that the Supper should be observed by Christians so long as they should remain absent or separated from the Lord—that is, through every age of the Church *on earth*.—This I fully believe, and know not on what other grounds my faith could rest with any thing like the firmness, which this view of the Scriptures affords.

I hope that these two illustrations—that drawn from the accounts of the events on the morning of the Resurrection, and that from Paul's language respecting the perpetuity of the Supper, as compared with similar language, when used by the Saviour, have convinced every serious, candid, and enquiring reader, of the correctness and importance of our views of inspiration, and of the unsoundness and dangerous tendency of that which Mr. Cheever inculcates.

If, however, any of my readers are not yet satisfied that such an inspiration as my opponents contend for, and have staked their christian faith upon, cannot be maintained, I would refer them to 2 Cor. vii. 8, in which they will find that Paul declares that, at one time, he *repented* having written his previous epistle to the Corinthians. The question for them to consider is this,—could Paul have repented of any thing that had been written at the suggestion, or by the guidance of the infallible and holy spirit of God?

UNITARIAN.

For the Salem Gazette, April 15, 1834.

Mr. Editor—I propose, in this article, to show that there is in the evangelical accounts of the occurrences of the morning of the resurrection, such a degree of substantial agreement as to establish their credibility, and that the actual discrepancies in them, while they utterly explode the doctrine of PLENARY INSPIRATION, are precisely such as ought to have been expected, and tend therefore to confirm the testimony of the writers.

It is thought necessary, when in the

common concerns of life we propose to obtain the truth of facts from testimony, to take into view the circumstances of the witnesses; and be governed by such a view, in forming an estimate of the value of their evidence. In such cases we pay a proper regard to the common laws of our nature. If the event, the knowledge of which we are endeavouring to acquire be astonishing or complex, we make an allowance for the propensity to exaggerate on the one hand, and the exposure to perplexity, misapprehension or inconsistency

on the other. If it be of a character to produce a deep and overwhelming excitement, we acknowledge the almost necessary connexion between such a state of mind and the agency of the imagination. If it occurred in the indistinctness of night, or the confusion of numbers, we immediately admit, that in such cases, the senses are unable to afford us that sure evidence which they might have done in the clear light of day, or the calmness of uninterrupted observation. Such considerations as these are founded upon principles, which are admitted as legitimate and essential by the most enlightened christian scholars, and are among the elements of all criticism, profane as well as sacred.

In pursuing the examination, upon which we are about to enter, we are not only authorised but compelled to be governed by such principles—to call to our aid all that we know of the influences of the occasion and the established laws of our nature. By this assistance, and by this only, shall we be enabled to place in that fair and perspicuous light of truth and substantial consistency, which is surely possible, this difficult portion of Holy Writ.

When all Judea was anxiously awaiting the fulfilment of prophecy and tradition in the appearance upon earth of the promised Messiah, who, as they supposed, was to raise them from the subjection into which they had sunk, annihilate the power and the very name of their enemies, and lead them through glory and honour, to universal empire; when every ear was listening to hear the first sound of his victorious trumpet, and every eye gazing to catch a glimpse of his triumphant banner;—in this state of feeling the reputed son of a mechanic, in the despised village of Nazareth, came forth and declared himself the Messiah. Wild as his claim appeared, by the exhibition of miraculous power he convinced a few indigent, simple and uneducated men of its truth. They separated themselves from their former occupations and friends in the full hope of becoming rulers and princes over some of the richest provinces of his boundless empire. But so fundamentally opposite were his principles and mode of life from what they had expected, that they were often upon the point of deserting his society and service, but were withheld by some new display of supernatural power, irresistible eloquence, or

commanding virtue. No language can paint the indignation and bitterness of the Jews. Besides the feeling of contempt which is always attached to an imposter, they were exasperated with what they believed to be a blasphemous attempt to pervert the purposes of God, and rob their Messiah of the dignity of his office. They persecuted the resolute, ridiculed the humble, and despised the peaceful Jesus, while his followers were treated with ignominy, as the weak and deluded instruments of a wretched imposture.

At length the hour approached when their malice and cruelty were to be consummated. The disciples of Jesus had partaken with him of the passover. They had listened to his affecting and solemn language as he broke the bread, and offered them the cup. They had followed him to the garden of Gethsemane, and had witnessed that hour of his mysterious trial and agony. They could not understand the cause of the “exceeding sorrow” which came over him as he occasionally walked aside “and fell on his face and prayed,” or of the peculiarly tender, melancholy, and anxious expression of his countenance as he turned back towards them and said, “watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.” All was dark and inexplicable.

While they were in this state of mind, the traitor Judas arrived, and Jesus surrendered himself, without a struggle, to his enemies. He was carried as a criminal, to the judgment hall, insulted, scourged, & condemned to an excruciating, shameful death. Concealing themselves in the crowd they followed him with a lingering hope, as he bore his cross. They saw him nailed, and hanging from it in torture. They did not yet despair, but waited with trembling solicitude for the moment to arrive, when he should come down to avenge his injuries, and assert his dominion. As the strength of his life was slowly diminishing, their expectations became more anxious, more agonizing.—With a loud voice he bowed his head—and died. At that moment every hope departed—all was lost to them. The warnings of their more prudent friends had proved to true. They had given up every thing, and gained nothing. They were pressed down by sorrow and shame. How could they bear the sight of their scorning countrymen! How could they

bear their own reflections! The portion of their lives, which they had spent with Jesus, was an inexplicable enigma. They remembered his miracles, his wisdom, his eloquence, his virtue, and his piety, but what were all these to them now! What were his assertions—his promises? A dream that had passed away; and there, upon a cross, was the lifeless bleeding form of *him* who had called himself, and whom they had believed to be the Deliverer and the King of Israel. A Roman spear had pierced his side. They turned away with thoughts and feelings little better than distraction; they sought to shelter themselves from the contemptuous triumph of the Jews, who were in the midst of the celebration of their great annual festival; and, in the seclusion of some solitary place, gave themselves up to the power of disappointment and despair.

As the women had not been under the influence of ambitious motives so much as of affection, they suffered deep and silent grief, rather than bitter poignant disappointment. The men were anxious to eradicate from their memories every trace of their humiliating delusion; they endeavoured to forget him whom they could not but look back upon with love and admiration, although he had, as they then thought, so miserably deceived them. The women cherished his memory and derived comfort and satisfaction from mourning together over his melancholy fate; they gathered round his cross, not so much with the hope of witnessing and aiding in his rescue and the development of his imperial character, as from sympathy with his sufferings, and a wish to soothe them. They watched the commitment of his corpse to the tomb, and were coming early on the first morning of the week to perform the last duty of affection and esteem. Here the narratives commence. Such was the probable situation of his followers, when our Lord rose from the dead, and such were their feelings when the circumstances occurred, of which they are the witnesses. Allowing for the influence of such a state of mind let us examine their testimony.

It is not to be disputed, that there are difficulties in the testimony. If it were possible fairly to reconcile all apparent verbal contrariety, which is certainly very doubtful, yet it cannot be denied that the impressions, with respect to the succession of the events, and the events themselves, derived from reading the narratives of the

different evangelists, are very unlike and discordant, so that we are ready to admit the existence of actual and real discrepancies. The extreme importance of the subject demands of us a thorough and candid examination, before we venture to determine, what is the legitimate weight of the objection drawn from these discrepancies. In the first place, let it be remembered, that it is requiring too much, to expect to find the statements of the same events, or series of events, by different writers, *exactly* similar. Such a similarity, it is well known, would be very unnatural, and by no means creditable to them on the score of veracity. The only valuable and real object is obtained, when we can reasonably convince ourselves, that we have arrived at a *true and satisfactory apprehension of the nature and succession of the events described*, and that this corresponds to the accounts before us, after making allowance for the peculiar circumstances of the writers.

The following *narrative* appears to me the most probable in itself, and the most easily, with the least violence to their individual statements, deduced from the combined and compared histories of the evangelists.

At some time during the second night and after the commencement of the third day of our Lord's sepulture, the angel of the Lord came down from heaven, and rolled away the stone from the entrance of the tomb.—Through fear of him the keepers were alarmed, becoming like dead men, while Jesus rose and departed from the tomb.—At the first gleam of the morning Mary Magdalene, accompanied by many other women, came bearing spices and perfumed ointments to the sepulchre, to embalm the body of their master. Upon approaching the spot, the large stone rolled away, and the entrance left open, very much surprised them. They hastened; and Mary giving a rapid glance within, discovered that the body had been removed. Without waiting to consult the other women, she ran immediately to inform the disciples. Her heart was bursting at the moment with grief and indignation, at the idea which she probably entertained, that the malice of his enemies, not satisfied with persecuting and giving him up to a degraded and cruel death, had followed her loved Master to the very grave, which they had rifled of his remains and carried them, she knew not whither. Upon reaching the apostles she was received by the

most of them, as we should be led to expect. She brought to their minds an unwelcome subject. They had suffered enough for their attachment to Jesus while living, and were not disposed to trouble or endanger themselves on his account, now that he was dead. It was only in the noble soul of Peter, and the affectionate heart of John, that Mary found any sympathy.—They accompanied her back to the tomb. Their minds were filled with anxious and conflicting emotions. They were at a loss to account for what Mary had been telling them, for it was really difficult to believe, that the Jews would have put themselves to the inconvenience, or have been so relentless, as to drag his body from the grave; and without such a supposition how could they explain what had happened? The glorious truth had not entered their minds. John being the youngest and most active, reached the tomb first, (the company of women having previously left it;) but the mysterious singularity of the whole affair affected him with that species of wonder, which is very much allied to, if not wholly made up of fear. He remained at the entrance. Not so with Peter, he was determined to be checked by nothing, but to sift the thing to the bottom, and revenge the insult which had been offered to his master while dead, with as much earnestness as he would have done while living. After satisfying themselves by an examination of the tomb of the truth of Mary's account, they returned, wondering at what had been done. She continued alone, mournfully watching the spot where she had last seen her Lord; and while gazing there, two angels appeared, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body had been laid. They say unto her 'Woman, why dost thou weep?' She said unto them 'Because they have taken away my master, and I know not where they have laid him.' Immediately after making this reply she turned round, and saw Jesus himself. When she had recognized him and received his message to his brethren, she went again and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and related what he had said unto her.—The women, with whom Mary Magdalene had come to the tomb in the first place, remained there while she was going to inform the disciples of the removal of the body. Soon after her departure the angels appeared to them and gave them directions to go and inform the disciples,

that Jesus had risen from the dead. They reached the place where the disciples were assembled, bringing the intelligence that they had seen a vision of angels, before the return of Peter and John from the sepulchre. In the latter part of the day, the "two" started for Emmaus. Sometime after their departure Jesus "appeared to Simon." In the evening the "two" returned from Emmaus, giving an account of their interview with the Lord; and soon after, while they were all assembled, communing in wonder, and overwhelmed with amazement at what the women, and especially at what Mary Magdalene and Peter, and the "two" had heard and seen, "Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, peace be unto you!"

Such I suppose to be the order of events on the morning and day of the resurrection.

The only *real* difficulty in reconciling the several narratives to this view of the course of events, arises from the statement made by Matthew, that the company of women saw Jesus. This statement I believe to be an error. But it is an error easily explained by supposing that Matthew blended the accounts of the women with that given by Mary Magdalene. It was perfectly natural that he should have done so; for he had heard that Mary, overcome with joy, wonder, gratitude, and awe at the sudden recognition of her Lord, fell at his feet. He had heard the other women repeat the message which they bore from the *angels*, and, in giving his account, he conveys the idea that the women were present with Mary and united with her in her prostration of affection and homage, and that they received from Jesus the message with which they were, actually, charged by the angels only. It is indeed very observable that what, in Matthew is represented to have been uttered by our Lord to the women, is compounded of what, according to the other evangelists, Jesus said to Mary, and the angels said to the women. How natural it was in Matthew thus to mingle events and messages which, in point of fact, occurred separately, I expect to be able to show to the satisfaction of the reader.

Before leaving this point I would notice a circumstance which illustrates the probability of the above supposition. It is a very curious fact that Matthew not only confounds the interviews of the women with the angels, and of Mary with Jesus, but inserts a circumstance which proves that he did not aim at precise accuracy in the nar-

rative. It seems from Luke that when the women saw the angels they "bowed down their faces to the earth," and Matthew ascribes the same act to them in their supposed interview with Jesus, "they held him by the feet and worshipped him," that is, *bowing their faces to the earth*, "they embraced his feet and did him homage." Now this expression of their embracing his feet, seems to be in direct conflict with the testimony of John who says that Jesus *forbid* Mary Magdalene to *touch* him. Mary undoubtedly made demonstrations of homage, or our Lord would not have had occasion to say unto her, "touch me not." The probability therefore is, that Matthew, having heard from the women that they prostrated themselves before the angels, and from Mary that she fell at the feet of the saviour, and mingling the two facts together, gives us to understand that "the women saw Jesus and bowing themselves to the ground embraced his feet and did him homage."

My supposition of the order of events, while it admits that in this single instance Matthew is in error, agrees *substantially* with the accounts given by Mark and Luke and *perfectly* with that given by John. And I know of no attempt, out of the many which have been made to harmonize the accounts, which has brought the discrepancy down to a narrower compass than this.

I now proceed to show, that the admission, that Matthew was in an error in this particular, so far from weakening, actually increases the credibility of the testimony he bears. It increases his credibility for the plain reason, that it is natural—that is, in accordance with what we know of the principles of human nature, and therefore such as ought to have been expected.

I say that the principles of human nature would lead us to expect discrepancies. To establish this, I refer to the description which has been attempted of the state of mind of the followers of Jesus during the time of his sepulture, and ask the attention of my readers to what I think a probable statement of the influence upon their feelings, and their convictions, of the accounts which they received of the resurrection; supposing that the events occurred, and that they were reported, according to the combined and collated narrative which I have given.—Very early in the morning, Mary Magdalene came running to the disciples with the intelligence of the removal of the body. She was received with a degree of indifference, for which I have endeavoured to account. Peter and John, however returned with her. Soon after their departure, the women who had seen the angels, came rushing in, one after another, agitated

and alarmed beyond measure, each affirming on the authority of the angels, in different words, and with varied minuteness, according to their different characters, a fact, than which nothing in all probability could seem more wild and incredible, the resurrection of a crucified man from the grave. The first emotion was a doubting astonishment; but the successive arrivals of the women bringing the same account, and the recollection of the miracles of Jesus, particularly the raising of Lazarus, began to work a gradual conviction of the truth of what they heard, when Peter and John came back; with the simple intelligence that the body was indeed gone, but that they had seen no angel—no miraculous appearance whatever. The effect of their report can be easily imagined.—Their superior authority, their coolness and self-possession, compared with the confusion and terror of the women, brought back and fixed more strongly than ever, the incredulity of the apostles. Every one knows the tendency of excited minds to shift from extreme to extreme. They had been almost persuaded to involve themselves afresh in the shame and disappointment under which they were still smarting, they had given a rash belief to the stories of the women; they now decidedly rejected them, and resolved not to allow themselves to be deceived by their 'idle tales.' Just at this unlucky moment, Mary Magdalene came in with the information, that she had seen two angels, and Jesus himself. Another scene of confusion commenced, but the single unsupported evidence of Mary, could not subdue the disbelief of the apostles, which had been already hardened by disappointment. In the language of Mark, 'although they heard that he was alive, and had been seen by her, they believed not.' Luke implies, that they were not brought to believe, until Jesus had appeared to Simon Peter.

Now is it natural to suppose, that Matthew, or any one else, who might have been in the midst of all this confusion, and have participated in all the vicissitudes of such high-wrought excitement, could have had clear and thoroughly accurate ideas of all the wonderful circumstances, that were affirmed and contradicted, believed and denied?

Such then is the consequence of the application of our principles of interpretation to the scriptures. Those discrepancies which, to a slight degree, must be admitted to exist in them, instead of being fatal to the cause of revelation, as they are allowed to be by the advocates of the old, and, until within a recent period, obsolete doctrine of *Plenary Inspiration*, become corroborative of the veracity of the writers, and of the truth of the events they relate.

In confirmation of this sentiment I would mention a fact, which I have often heard. One of the greatest lawyers America ever produced, who presided in the Supreme Court of Massachusetts within the memory

of many of your subscribers, and whose opinion on this point, owing to his remarkable theological as well as legal acquirements, was worth as much as that of any man who ever lived, examined the narratives of the evangelical writers as he would have done had they been brought before him in his judicial character, and upon a careful comparison and scrutiny of their testimony, he pronounced it true and conclusive, and declared that it possessed, in its diversity as well as its agreement, all those marks which are thought to enhance the credit of evidence when adduced in a court of law.

The following passage from Bishop Marsh's translation of Michaelis's "Introduction to the New Testament," will illustrate and confirm the views I have presented. It is so much to the purpose, and so instructive, that the whole section is given, notwithstanding its length. It of course will be decisive with my opponents, because they have declared that their "own views of inspiration, which are, and have been, and will be, to the end of time, the views of all real believers in the divine origin of christianity," could be expressed "in the language of the acute and learned Michaelis"—see "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth," March 7.

"If it can be shewn, that real contradictions, that is, such as are wholly incapable of a reconciliation, exist in the four Gospels, the only inference to be deduced is, that the writers were not infallible, or in other words, not inspired by the Deity; but we are by no means warranted to conclude, because the historians vary in their accounts, that the history itself is a forgery. I have treated this subject at large in the Preface to the History of the Resurrection; at present, therefore, I shall only remark what deserves particular notice.

When several persons relate the same story it is hardly possible, even if they were eyewitnesses to the transaction which they record, and still less so if they received their information from others, to coincide exactly in their accounts, since the same circumstances will either not be observed or not be remembered by all. Yet if they all agreed in the main point no one would conclude that the whole story was a forgery, merely because the persons, who related it, disagreed in some of the concomitant circumstances. An inference of this kind would convert the most valuable histories into fabulous legends.

When two Prussian officers, who served during the seven years war, from 1756 to 1763, relate the transactions of that memorable period, each of them is guilty of some mistakes, especially in regard to dates and numbers, of which the unavoidable consequence is, that

they will contradict each other. If we read Lloyd's and Tempelhoff's History of this war, we shall find not only that they contradict each other, but that both of them frequently contradict the official intelligence printed in the Berlin Gazette. I will mention as an instance, the battle of Prague, in which Lloyd has made the list of killed and wounded on the part of the Austrians so very inconsiderable as to be almost incredible, when we consider the important consequences, to which that engagement immediately led. Yet no one would therefore conclude, either that the seven years war in general, or the battle of Prague in particular, was a mere fable. Whoever has examined the sources of the Roman history, not barely with a view of learning a dead language, but with the eye of a critical historian, must have observed many contradictions, which no art can possibly reconcile. The battle of Pharsalia, for instance, is described by Florus in a manner very different from that, in which it is described by Cæsar: for in their accounts of the number of the combatants, which entered the field on both sides, there is a difference of not less than an hundred and fifty thousand. Yet no man would therefore contend that the battle of Pharsalia, which determined the fate of the world, was a mere fable. It is the same with the Grecian history even in the most enlightened ages; as appears from the contradictions in the accounts which we read of the expedition of Xerxes, and the strength of his army. The history of the celebrated Judas Maccabæus, as related in the first book of the Maccabees, a work written at the same time when Judas himself lived, differs frequently from the same history as related in the second book of the Maccabees, and sometimes from the accounts of Josephus. Nay, what is still more, we find Josephus contradicting even himself, when we compare his Antiquities with his History of the Jewish war. I mention Josephus in particular, as an author in whose writings contradictions are to be found, because I can refer, in support of my assertion, to my notes to the first book of the Maccabees, in which many of those contradictions are noted.

If the four Evangelists were not rendered infallible by the immediate intervention of the Deity, it is hardly possible, that their accounts should be wholly free from error, and therefore in no case contradictory to each other.—But even if it be true, that their accounts are sometimes at variance, it by no means follows, that the history itself, the miracles, and the resurrection of Christ are a forgery: and the only inference, which we can deduce from it, is that the Evangelists were not inspired, at least not in the relation of historical facts. I have already observed in this Introduction, as well as in my History of the Resurrection, that a concession of this kind is no injury to the Christian religion: to two of the Evangelists, Mark and Luke, the promise of the supernatural assistance of the Holy Ghost, which was given by Christ to the Apostles, is wholly inapplicable, and I have freely confes-

sed in the first volume of this work that *I can see no proof of their having been inspired*. St. Matthew and St. John were, it is true, Apostles; but shall we therefore conclude that they were inspired in matters of history? The passage which I quoted in the chapter on Inspiration from John xiv. 26. "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, *whatsoever I have said unto you*," contains a promise of assistance from the Holy Ghost, and of the infallibility arising from that assistance, merely in respect to the speeches and discourses of Christ, which form the primary source of our religious faith and knowledge; but it contains no promise, at least none in direct positive terms, of any supernatural aid in the recording of facts, which they had either seen themselves, or heard from others. To speak the truth, *I do not believe that the Evangelists were divinely inspired in matters of history*; I have made this declaration already in the second edition of my Dogmatic Theology, where I have given the grounds of my opinion, which it is here unnecessary to transcribe. This opinion by no means impugns the doctrines of the Lutheran Church, as delivered in the Symbolic Books, though it is contrary to the tenets which are advanced in many of our systems of divinity.

Are there really contradictions then, it may be asked, in the four Gospels, which are utterly incapable of being reconciled? I will not positively and decidedly assert that there are, because, as every assertion requires proof, I should be under the necessity of examining at each particular example the various arguments, which have been alleged both for, and against the question, which would give rise to a disquisition too long for the present place. I will only say, therefore, it appears to me, that there are such contradictions; but their number is very inconsiderable, and indeed much more inconsiderable, than in proportion to the variety of matter in the four Gospels we might reasonably expect. I will mention a single instance, the account of the blind Bartimeus at Jericho, related Matth. xx. 29—34. Mark x. 46—52. Luke xviii. 35—43. I find no contradiction in the circumstance, that St. Matthew, who was eye witness to the transaction, speaks of two blind persons, St. Mark and St. Luke on the contrary, of only one, who by St. Mark is called Bartimeus; since it is possible that two blind persons on that occasion received their sight, that both of them were known to St. Matthew, who was present at the time, but that only one of them was known to St. Mark and St. Luke, who were not eye-witnesses to the fact. So far, then, the accounts are not contradictory, and all that can be said is, that one Evangelist has related less, than is related by the other, because he was not omniscient, and therefore did not know all that happened. But when St. Matthew and St. Mark, of whom the former was an eye-witness, relate that the miracle was performed by Christ "as he went out of Jericho," St. Luke on the contrary, "as he was

come nigh unto Jericho," and moreover the entry into that city is mentioned by St. Luke, as having taken place *after* the performance of the miracle, I confess that I am wholly unable to reconcile the contradiction, and must therefore conclude that St. Luke, who was not an eye-witness to the fact, was in this instance mistaken. In a subsequent part of this Introduction, where I treat of St. Luke's Gospel in particular, I shall take notice of several examples of this kind, and observe that the most material contradictions, which I am unable to reconcile, are between St. Luke and those two Evangelists, who were eye-witnesses to the facts, which they have recorded.

Whether St. John has corrected in an indirect and delicate manner the faults of his predecessors is a question, which I shall reserve for that part, where I especially examine the Gospel of that Evangelist." Vol. iv. p. 25

Strengthened by such authority, I would again express my belief that the discrepancies in the accounts we have been considering, are just what ought to have been expected from writers who, like Luke for instance, profess to relate events at second hand, as they received them from the persons who visited the sepulchre under the circumstances of the time and place, as they have been described. We must remember too, that the transactions related in these accounts, became after the lapse of a few short hours, of no importance whatever to the disciples of Christ. It was manifestly a matter of indifference to them *who* saw him *first*, when the great fact that he had risen was fully ascertained to them. It was a question of no sort of moment or interest to them in *what order* the incidents of that day of despair, amazement, joy, wonder, doubt, disappointment, and disbelief, took place, when at its close Jesus stood in their presence, smiling upon them with a countenance even more radiant with divine benignity than it had been in the days of his mortal flesh. It is rather surprising that the events of the morning, unsatisfactory and perplexing as they were, at the time of their occurrence, were remembered at all when the evening of the same day had stripped them of their importance, and thrown them into comparative insignificance, by the superior, nay the superlative, interest of the scene it disclosed.

Neither must it be forgotten that the events of that morning were of no consequence to the disciples, in reference to the evidence upon which they rested their assertion that Christ had risen. They do not enter into the argument by which that fact is proved, as those of my readers remember, who had the opportunity of hearing it stated by Rev. Mr. Brazier, in his Lecture before the Young Men of Sa-

lem. That Christ did rise from the dead, they had infinitely better proof than the declarations of these agitated and terrified women—of that fact they had every conceivable kind of proof. They saw and conversed with him, after his resurrection, in the presence of hundreds—enjoyed his society for forty days, and finally beheld, with their own eyes, his visible ascension in glory, to the bosom of his father.

The reader has now seen the immense importance of our principles of interpretation, in reconciling the discrepancies of the scripture writers. Before leaving the subject I would observe that upon the principle of *plenary* inspiration, these discrepancies not only become insurmountable and *fatal* difficulties, but are very much increased in number. This can be made to appear in a very few words.

John says that the women went to the sepulchre "when it was *yet dark*." Matthew says, "as it *began to dawn*"; while Mark says, "at the *rising of the sun*."

It is distressing to reflect upon the infinite pains that have been taken, the pages that have been written, and the learned ingenuity that has been wasted in endeavoring to show that all these expressions are perfectly synonymous. Some harmonists, giving up the attempt in despair, have, in violation of the clear and obvious sense of the writers, conjectured that some of the women went while it was *yet dark*, others when it *began to dawn*, and others again at the *rising of the sun*! But Bishop Watson, who was an honest man, acknowledges, in his answer to Paine, that the *witnesses differed* on this point. While such an acknowledgment is fatal to the doctrine of *plenary inspiration*, it confirms the testimony of the witnesses when they are examined by our principles. When we regard them as detailing, in the exercise of their own faculties, narratives they had received from others, we do not look for the precise similarity which certainly would have been the result, had the unerring spirit of God superintended their pens, but expect those variations which we know to be natural. To us there is no real discrepancy in these expressions. We see, in the several different phrases and forms of thought, merely a confirmation of the *substantial fact* that the women went to the sepulchre, as Luke expresses it, "very early in the morning."

Let us then be thankful that the great controversy which has so long agitated the christian world, is brought at last within a space where all can judge and decide for themselves.

The cause of orthodoxy is now confessedly identified with the doctrine of *plenary inspiration*. If that doctrine cannot be maintained, then, by the consent of the combatants and parties, judgment must be passed against orthodoxy. Here then is a touchstone and a test.

If every word in the Bible was written under the superintending influence of the divine spirit, then a narrative of events *can be* constructed, which would harmonize with absolute verbal exactness, *all* the facts described or alluded to in the evangelical accounts of the morning of the Resurrection. Such a harmony never has been and I confidently assert, never can be constructed without a multiplication of the events and a subdivision of the parties, to an extent that will throw an air of improbability or impracticability over the whole transaction. Gilbert West, who has the reputation among the orthodox, of having written better than any one else on the subject, and all who preceded or have followed him, in this impossible task, have taken more violent liberties with the text than any other interpreters have ever dared to do; and have applied their own fancies and conjectures in a manner, which no historical records can bear, and which ought not to be tolerated by those christians who have a proper reverence for the word of God.

Until my opponent can harmonize the several accounts which he has himself brought into discussion, into a consistent, clear, reasonable and probable narration which will accord *precisely with every syllable* in each of them, let us hear no more the arrogant and abusive imputation that we are infidels because we do not receive the doctrine of *plenary* inspiration; and until he has done this, let him not venture upon the rash and desperate assertion, that if such a view of inspiration cannot be maintained, the religion itself will be incapable of proof, and must be surrendered as a visionary, false, flitting phantom! May the reckless and irreverent declaration, "Plenary Inspiration or no Bible," never again shock the ears and wound the hearts of those who prize and love the gospel, and who would sacrifice every thing and endure every thing before they would surrender, as upon this alternative they would be compelled to surrender, the faith it inculcates and the hopes it inspires.

In the next paper the subject of *PLENARY INSPIRATION* will be still further discussed.

UNITARIAN.

From the Salem Gazette, April 18, 1834.

Mr. Editor,—It is well known that Unitarians generally deny the Plenary Inspiration of the scriptures, and that for this reason chiefly, they are now accused, by their Trinitarian neighbors of virtual infidelity. To vindicate them still further against this accusation and to show the incorrectness of the inference on which it is founded is the object of the remarks which I shall now submit to the candid and attentive consideration of your readers.

The subject of the inspiration of the scriptures every christian will admit is one of very considerable importance, yet perhaps its pretensions have sometimes been unduly magnified. It must not be regarded as involving a vital inquiry; vital, I mean, to religion. It does not go to the foundation of christian faith; it does not reach the truth and divine authority of the Christian Religion; it does not move at all the great questions between the believer and the unbeliever. But it is important just as every thing else is concerning the mode in which revealed religion has been given to the world; just as is the inquiry, for instance, concerning the original sources of information of which the sacred writers might have availed themselves, or the languages in which the respective books were originally written, or the particular circumstances in certain churches which called forth special epistles or parts of epistles, or the time and place when and where each book was written.

These are interesting and, to some extent, important topics of investigation; but they do not embrace the great FACT of the credibility of the scriptures—a fact, I may add, which depends less than is commonly supposed on the particular mode in which they were, at first, written and published, for its evidence. There is in the scriptures themselves an intrinsic credibility—a credibility arising from the very nature of their contents, which commends them to the reason and conscience and faith, of every humble and serious reader.

A belief in their inspiration is *one* thing, and a belief in the scriptures themselves, or what they teach and in their authority to teach, is quite another thing. Faith in revealed religion must not be confounded with a belief in the supernatural qualifications of those who made the records of the revelation. Revelation was first *spoken* by men as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; and then *written* by them or by others well qual-

ified,—whether supernaturally or not, I do not now say—for that office, the office of scribes or historians. Now whether we suppose they were supernaturally qualified, or qualified only as the historians of other events are, whether we admit or deny the inspiration of the sacred writers, provided we have full confidence in their ability and integrity, is a point not material at all to our faith in the divine authority and infallible truth of what they have written.

It will not be denied that revelation must have *preceded* the scripture,—the writing,—the record of it. The christian religion had been taught and believed many years before Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote their gospels. Did the faith of those who then heard the word depend on the subsequent inspiration of these men? What if no record had ever been made of Christianity, does any one suppose that the name of Christ and a knowledge of the truth revealed by him, would have been lost? Would they not, in all probability, have been propagated and handed down by the influence of the standing ordinances, by the regular observance of the Lord's day, and by the zeal, piety and fidelity of christian ministers? And supposing they had come down to us in this way, where then would be the doctrine of the *PLENARY inspiration* of the scriptures,—the belief of which we have been informed is absolutely necessary in order to avoid the imputation of infidelity?

There would undoubtedly still remain a strong and life-giving faith in men's hearts independent of any inspired writing, just as it existed in the early days of Christianity, before any portion of the New Testament was written, when the disciples received the word with joy, as it fell burning from the lips of its first preachers.

We may take another view of the subject.

Before us are certain books which all who receive them agree in regarding as the supreme rule of their faith and conduct. Why do we agree in this—why do we place this confidence in them? Is it because we think they were written by the dictation of the Spirit of God, or is it because we think they contain a record, made by honest and faithful and competent men, of what certain persons said and did who spake and acted as *they* were moved by that Spirit? Is it because we think they were written under a supernatural inspiration, or because they bear internal marks of having been produced by men who could not have been mistaken as to the facts

which they relate, and who stand, in their characters, above even the suspicion of imposture? We have no hesitation about believing what we read in the authentic histories of antiquity—in Livy or Tacitus, for example: yet we never think of coupling our faith in what they relate with a belief in their inspiration. On the same ground, faith in christianity is entirely independent of a belief in the inspiration of the historians of Christianity.

In taking this position which some of our Trinitarian friends will probably pronounce a very dangerous one, I am happy to find myself supported by a pretty strong detachment from their own corps.

Dr. Paley says, "The inspiration of the historical scriptures, the nature, degree and extent of that inspiration, are questions undoubtedly of serious discussion: but they are questions amongst *Christians themselves and not between them and others*. The doctrine itself is by no means necessary to the belief of Christianity which must in the first instance, at least, depend on the ordinary maxims of historical credibility."

Michaelis, an eminent trinitarian theologian of the last century, well known by this time to your readers, in an essay on the inspiration of the New Testament, has this language—"The question whether the books of the N. T. are *inspired* is not so important as the question whether they are *genuine*. The truth of our religion depends on the latter, not absolutely on the former. Had the Deity inspired not a single book of the N. T. but left the apostles and evangelists without any other aid, than that of natural abilities to commit what they knew to writing--admitting their works to be authentic and possessed of a sufficient degree of credibility,—the christian religion would still remain the true one." "It is possible to doubt and even deny the inspiration of the N. T. and yet be fully persuaded of the truth of the christian religion: and many entertain these sentiments either publicly or in private to whom we should render great injustice if we ranked them in the class of *unbelievers*."

The learned Dr. Herbert Marsh, who formerly occupied the chair of Divinity in one of the English Universities, and is now Bp. of Peterborough, in a note on the above passage of Michaelis remarks, "Here our author makes a distinction which is at present **VERY GENERALLY RECEIVED** between the divine origin of the christian doctrine and

the divine origin of the writings in which that doctrine is recorded." So the reader perceives it is admitted by a Trinitarian of great learning and eminent authority that this *distinction is now very generally received!* If then they, who receive this distinction are to be regarded as *unbelievers*, how many, alas, even of our opposing brethren, will be found in that condemnation! Orthodoxy must be on her guard, or she will find herself condemned out of her own mouth!

I will now proceed to unfold and illustrate still more particularly our own views of the inspiration of the scriptures. In expressing these views I shall make very free use of the published opinions of Trinitarians, because their authority carries with it greater weight to some minds, than any arguments whatever. I begin by observing that Unitarians believe in a limited or partial inspiration of the writers of the New Testament. We believe that they had all the assistance which was necessary to render them correct historians of christianity, and to preserve them from all material error in every thing they have recorded.

The scriptural writers, having been made, either by ordinary or supernatural means, fully acquainted with their subject, "were left in writing," says the author of the essay on this subject in Horne's Introduction, "to the common use of their faculties, and did not upon every occasion stand in need of supernatural communication. But whenever and as far as divine assistance was necessary" (to enable them to communicate with accuracy what it was God's design should form a part of his holy word,) "it was always afforded." Such assistance, it may be, was often necessary: whenever it was there can be no doubt they received it. It is not important for us to determine what parts were written with this assistance and what were not. Some portions there are of the sacred volume to have written which we should think no divine aid could have been necessary, and therefore none would have been given.

The judicious author just quoted,—a Trinitarian not a whit behind any amongst us in learning and worth,—says, "Though it is evident that the sacred historians sometimes wrote under the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit, it does not follow that they derived from revelation a knowledge of those things which might be collected from the common sources of human intelligence. It is sufficient to believe that by the general superintendence of the Holy

Spirit they were directed in the choice of their materials, enlightened to judge of the truth and importance of those accounts from which they *borrowed their information*, and prevented from recording any *material* error."

The reader will bear in mind that the quotations last made are from a work of great celebrity among the orthodox, both in this country and in England. The sentiments are the same as those held by us, and in giving the weight of its authority in our favor it must be considered as having uttered a rebuke, which ought to be felt by those who have ventured to declare that all who follow us in these views, are advancing in the broad road that leads to infidelity!

I shall now proceed to quote other authorities in opposition to the doctrine of Plenary Inspiration which may, it is possible, *make some of the recent advocates* of that theological absurdity stare! Let it be remembered that all the authorities hitherto adduced in this communication have been Trinitarian. How singular that they should be found corroborating Unitarian heresies; or rather that it should appear that Unitarians have, in this particular, derived their views from them!

"The doctrine itself" says Dr. Paley, "must be received, but it is not necessary in order to defend christianity, to defend the propriety of every comparison or the validity of every argument which the apostle has brought into the discussion." Now this is all that Unitarians contend for. They believe—while they admit the truth of every apostolic *doctrine*—that the apostles might have committed slight errors in their opinions on topics not essentially connected with christianity.

"Where divine writers argue upon any point," says Bishop Burnet, a distinguished author and dignitary in an orthodox church, "we are always bound to believe the conclusions, that their reasonings end in, as parts of divine Revelation: but we are not bound to be able to make out or even to assent to all the premises made use of by them in their whole extent, unless it appears plainly that they affirm the premises as expressly as they do the conclusions proved by them."

Michaelis, remarking upon the discrepancies in the evangelical histories, observes that "though it is true that the greatest part are only *apparent* contradictions, there are others again where so much

art and finesse are displayed, [by commentators] to make the accounts coincide, that there is no room for any other conclusion than that one of the Evangelists is *mistaken*, and I have found examples where St. John appears in a delicate manner to have corrected the faults of his predecessors." Has any Unitarian asserted the fallibility of the sacred writers in plainer terms than these? Again he says, "If the word inspiration be taken in such a sense as to include infallibility, we can scarcely believe that St. Mark and St. Luke were inspired."

The views held by us of the limited inspiration of the sacred writers are the only ones, I conceive, on which Christianity can be vindicated and sustained against the assaults of its enemies. The subject-matter, the great doctrines of the scriptures, were undeniably given by inspiration. They who made the record had supernatural assistance so far as was necessary to a general accuracy, and no farther. Some things recorded by them they knew in the same way that we have knowledge of passing events. In relating them they could have needed no assistance and therefore it is unreasonable to suppose they had it.

The views of inspiration in which we are generally united have long been maintained by learned divines with whom, in almost every thing else, we disagree. Luther, Erasmus, Beza, Salmasius, and many others, supposed that inspiration was limited to *ideas* alone, and did not extend to the language or mode of communication. In later times, Warburton, Tillotson, Doddridge and many others have explained inspiration as if, in the strict sense of the word, it extended to *particular cases only*, while they have allowed that the sacred penmen had every where the divine assistance so far as to be prevented from *material* error. I have room only for a few extracts from two of the writers above named, Bishop Warburton and Archbishop Tillotson. The former I shall quote at considerable length, both on account of the authority of his name and the truth and force of his remarks.

"The Scriptures," says Warburton, "of the New Testament have been received by all the Faithful, as divine oracles, as the inspired dictates of the Holy Spirit; till *SUPERSTITION* extending the notion of inspiration to an *extravagant length*, over-cautious believers joined with libertines who had taken advantage of the others' folly to deny or bring in question all inspiration whatever. For extremes beget each other; and when thus begotten, they are suf-

ferred, in order, to preserve the balance of the moral system, as frequently to support as to destroy one another; that, while they subsist, each may defeat the mischiefs which the other threatens; and when they fall, both of them may fall together."

"A spurious opinion, begotten in the Jewish church by superstition, and nursed up by mistaken piety in the christian, hath almost passed into an article of faith, "That the language of Scripture was dictated by the Holy Spirit in such sort that the writers were but the passive organs through which every word and letter were conveyed." And as superstition seldom knows where to stop, the Mahometans improved on this fancy, and represented their Scriptures as sent them down from Heaven ready written. Having got into so fair a train, the next theological question in honor of the Alcoran was, whether it was *created* or *uncreated*; and the orthodox determination, we may be sure, was the latter. But it was a rabbinical hyperbole, concerning the unvariable reading of the copies of the law, which seems to have given the Mahometan doctors a hint for this last conceit, concerning the physical nature of the Alcoran.

"But there are many objections to that idea of organic inspiration which mistaken piety hath adopted.

"1. It would be putting the Holy Spirit on unnecessary employment; for much of these sacred volumes being historical, and of facts and discourses which had fallen under the observation of the writers, they did not need his immediate assistance to do this part of their business for them.

"2. Had the Scriptures been written under this organic inspiration, there must have been the most perfect agreement amongst the four Evangelists, in every circumstance of the smallest fact. But we see there is not this perfect agreement. In some minute particulars, which regard neither faith nor manners, neither the truth nor certainty of the history in general, the several writers vary from one another. A variation, which, though it discredits the notion of organic inspiration, yet (which is of much more importance) supports the fidelity of the historians; as it shews they did not write in concert, or copy from one another; but that each described the proper impressions which the same facts made upon himself.

"3. Were this the true idea of Scripture inspiration, that each writer was but the mere organ of the Spirit, the phraseology or turn of expression had been but one and the same throughout all the sacred books written in the same language: whereas we find it to be very different and various; always corresponding to the condition, tempers and capacities of the writers.

"4. Lastly, the very words of Scripture must in this case have been preserved, throughout all ages, perfectly pure and free from the corruptions and mistakes of transcribers. For if it were expedient, useful and sorting with the

views of divine wisdom, that every word and letter should be inspired, it was equally expedient that every word and letter should be preserved uncorrupt; otherwise, the Holy Spirit would appear to have laboured in vain. Now general experience assures us, that this is not the case; frequent transcribing has occasioned numerous variations in words and phrases throughout all the Scriptures of the New Testament. But though this opposes the notion of organic inspiration, yet the harmless nature of the variations, which never disturb the sense, nor obscure a single proposition of faith, or precept of good manners, affords us a noble instance of the gracious providence of God, in bringing down to us those Scriptures, destined for an *infallible rule*, incorrupt and entire, in all essential and even material points; though after escaping the impure hands of so many outrageous bigots, schismatic visionaries, and heretical seducers, they had a long journey still to run, through the dark cloisters of dreaming superstition, and of ignorance but half awake.

"But it may be said, that, on this moderated idea of inspiration, we shall never be able to distinguish which parts were written under the immediate influence of the spirit, and which were the product of human knowledge only. What if we shall not? Where is the mischief or inconvenience? While all we want to know is, that every sentence of Scripture, which but remotely concerns either faith or practice, is infallibly true. It is of little consequence to us to be instructed how or in what manner that truth came to be secured: whether by direct inspiration: or by that virtual superintendence of the Spirit, which preserved the writers from error. Scripture is the rule of Christian conduct; and if the rule be known to be unerring, this is all that is wanting to effectuate its end.

"In a word it imports us little to be solicitous about the Scriptural DELIVERY of Gospel truths whether they be conveyed to us by means *merely human* or by the more powerful workings of the Holy Spirit, so long as we are assured that Divine Providence guarded that delivery from all approach of error. But then let us observe that this is a very different thing from the ORIGIN of the truths themselves, for on this latter, the reality of our religion, indeed, depends; the very nature of it consisting in this, that the doctrines which it teacheth be not only truths simply, but truths REVEALED from Heaven. And indeed, even with regard to the *delivery*, when the writers propose anything of *faith* or *practice*, explanatory of what their master taught, and not explicitly contained in his words, we must needs conclude, that so far forth they were under

the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit who was to teach them all things : and this influence the apostle calls *speaking by revelation*.

“ Thus we see the advantages resulting from a PARTIAL INSPIRATION as here contended for and explained. It answers all the ends of a Scripture universally and organically inspired, by producing an UNERRING RULE of faith and manners ; and besides, *obviates* all these objections to *inspiration* which arise from the too high notion of it : such as trifling errors in circumstances of small importance ; for the least error is inconsistent with organic *inspiration*, but may well stand with a virtual and co-operating influence. Such again, as the various readings in the several transcripts ; and the various styles amongst the several authors of scripture : inconsistencies which would never have been permitted, and contrarieties which could never have happened under universal inspiration ; but which are the natural and harmless consequences of the PARTIAL.”

The following is from Arch Bishop Tillotson :—

“ But if any one inquire how far the penmen of scripture were inspired in the writing of those books ? whether only so far as to be secured from mistake in the delivery of any message or doctrine from God, or in the relation of any history or matter of fact ; yet so, as they were left every man to his own style and manner of expression ? or that every thing they wrote, was immediately dictated to them, and that not only the sense of it, but the very words and phrases by which they express things, and that they were merely instruments or penmen, I shall not take upon me to determine ; I shall only say this in general, that considering the end of this inspiration, which was to inform the world certainly of the mind and will of God, it is necessary for every man to believe that the inspired penmen of scripture were so far assisted as was necessary to this end : and he that thinks upon good grounds that this end cannot be secured, unless every word and syllable were immediately dictated, he hath reason to believe it was so ; but if any man upon good grounds thinks the end of writing the scripture may be sufficiently secured without that, he hath no reason to conclude, that God, who is not wanting in

what is necessary, is guilty of doing what is superfluous. And if any man is of opinion that *Moses* might write the history of those actions which he himself did or was present at, without an immediate revelation of them ; or that *Solomon* by his natural and acquired wisdom might speak those wise sayings which are in his *Proverbs* ; or the *Evangelists* might write what they heard and saw, or what they had good assurance of from others, as St. Luke tells he did ; or that St. Paul might write for his cloak and parchments at Troas, and salute by name his friends and brethren, or that he might advise Timothy to drink a little wine, &c. without the immediate dictate of the spirit of God, *he seems to have reason on his side*. For that men may, without an immediate revelation *write* those things which they *think* without a revelation, seems very plain. And that they did so, there is probable argument for it, because we find that the Evangelists in relating the discourses of Christ, are very far from agreeing in the particular expressions and words, though they agree in the substance of the discourses : but if the words had been dictated by the Spirit of God, they must have agreed in them. For when St. Luke differs from St. Matthew, in relating what our Saviour said, it is impossible that they should both relate it right, as to the very words and form of expression ; but that both relate the substance of what he said. And if it had been of concernment, that every thing that they wrote should be dictated *ad apicem*, to a title, by the Spirit of God, it is of the same concernment still, that the Providence of God should have secured the Scriptures since to a title from the least alteration : which that it is not done, appears by the various readings both of the Old and New Testament, concerning which, no man can infallibly say, that this is right, and not the other. It seems sufficient in this matter to assert, that the Spirit of God did reveal to the penmen of the scriptures what was necessary to be revealed : and as to all other things, that he did superintend them in the writing of it, so far as to secure them from any *material* error or mistake in what they have delivered.”

I shall now examine, as briefly as I can, the testimony of the scriptures on this subject and the evidence to be derived from them in favor of our views.

PROFESSOR STUART has recently declared his conviction that the New Testament writers were not possessed of an abiding inspiration. In expressing this opinion he is fully confirmed by the language of the writers themselves.

In the first chapter of Acts, verse 6, we find it stated that the apostles were ignorant of the meaning of Christ, when he spoke of his "*coming*," and that the Saviour declared that they were to remain in ignorance on this point. "*It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put into his own power.*"

That Peter was ignorant of the great design of the gospel, in reference to its extension to the gentiles, long after he had preached its doctrines, and wrought miracles in its behalf, and multiplied converts to its cause, is evident from his reluctance to interpret aright the vision related in Acts x. "But Peter said, *not so, Lord.*" A few verses farther on it is said, "Now while Peter *doubted* in himself *what* this vision, which he had seen, *should mean.*"

Near the close of the xvth chapter of the same book, it is stated that the contention, or difference of opinion, between Paul and Barnabas, was so sharp that they separated!

In the first part of the xxii. chapter, we are taught that Paul's inspiration was not sufficient to inform him of the official station of Ananias, "I wist not, brethren, that he was the High Priest."

The writer of the Acts of the Apostles also informs us that on several occasions an angelic vision, or some other special manifestation, was provided to instruct the apostles in the will of God, and in the course he required them to adopt.

There is a very striking proof, 1 Cor. i. 14—17, that Paul had not such an abiding inspiration as enabled him to avoid all doubt, or even error *in his writings*. "I thank God that I baptised *none of you*, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptised in mine own name. And I baptised *also* the household of Stephanus; besides, *I know not whether I baptised any other.*" He first says that he *only* baptised two persons whom he names; afterwards he recollects *an entire family* besides, and then perceiving that he had fallen into an error, he acknowledges that he cannot speak with absolute confidence upon the point!

In the vii chapter of the same epistle, Paul expressly declares that he does not, at the time, speak by a *plenary inspiration*, in verses 6, 12, 25, and 40. He makes the same positive assertion 2 Cor. viii. 8, and also xi. 17. And in xii. chapter of the same, verses 2 and 3, he expresses his inability to determine the precise character of a most interesting event in his own history.

In Gal. ii. 2, he informs us that he went to Jerusalem "fourteen years" after his conversion to *consult* with the leading brethren there whether he had been pursuing such a

course in his ministry as would receive their entire approbation. In the same chapter he gives an account of his personal controversy with Peter; and finally in his epistle to the Philippians, iii. 12, he acknowledges the imperfection of his knowledge, and his desire to make larger attainments.

The passages, to which I have now referred, prove, if any thing can be proved, that Paul, and Peter, and Barnabas, did not possess such a degree of inspiration as would have rendered them *incapable* of doubt, and error, and ignorance, either as preachers of the gospel, or as *writers*. It is evident that what they relate consists, in part, of what they had heard from others, or had ascertained by the use of their natural faculties, and, in part, of what was made known by direct inspiration, or occasional divine communication. Paul particularly declares that this was the case with him. In Acts xxvi. he gives Agrippa an account of his own miraculous conversion, in which he thus describes the commission he received from Jesus on that occasion. "I have appeared unto thee, for this purpose, to make thee a minister, and witness, *both* of those things which *thou hast seen*, and of those things in the which *I will appear unto thee.*"

I will mention one more illustration of the correctness of our views. The reader remembers the passage, 2 Tim. iv. 13, in which Paul says, "the cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments." The next verse is this. "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works."

While the imprecation at the close of the verse, has often surprised the reader, as expressing a state of feeling entirely adverse to the example and precept of Christ, and to the whole genius of his religion; it is perfectly natural, and in singular harmony with the character of Paul. The mention of the coppersmith's name awakened those feelings of resentment and indignation which a great personal injury had occasioned, and in the *un-guarded haste of composition*, he expressed them. Cannot the reader recognize in this the same ardent and impetuous spirit which answered the blow given by order of Ananias with the impassioned violence of a sudden temper. "God shall smite thee thou whited wall!" This is not inspiration—but it is nature—and it is *truth*.

Now let us return to the passage in Timothy. Two verses beyond that in which the unreflecting imprecation is uttered against the coppersmith, we find that, after speaking of others who had also exposed themselves to his resentment, he adds the following—"I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge." The christian temper had again obtained the ascendancy, and nature had yielded to grace.

Does not the reader see the same Paul, in this, who after the first burst of passion had

passed over him, retracted his sudden and unguarded language, apologized for his disrespectful treatment of the High Priest, and acknowledged that it was wrong to speak evil of the ruler of the people.

This is as striking an exhibition of nature as ever was given, and in the very errors and defects of Paul's conduct before Ananias, and in writing to Timothy, we perceive a complete refutation of the doctrine of *plenary inspiration*, and a most curious and decisive evidence of the truth and naturalness of character of the great apostle to the gentiles.

The result then of the whole is that Paul, occasionally at least, was not under the direction or superintendence of the divine spirit, but was sometimes, not only as a preacher, BUT AS A WRITER, liable to the passions, errors, and ignorance belonging to human nature. But while we receive this conclusion, at the same time, we believe him to have been inspired; that is, his mind was supernaturally informed and illuminated with respect to the evidences and doctrines of christianity, and he was infallible, *within the compass of the knowledge thus conveyed to him*, or as Peter expressed it (in the same passage in which he says that there "are some things hard to be understood" in Paul's epistles) "according to the wisdom given unto him."

There are two texts which are sometimes adduced to prove from the Scriptures themselves that they were written throughout by *plenary inspiration*.

The first is taken from 2 Peter, I. 21: "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. It is necessary to ALTER "spoke" into "wrote," before this text can be imagined to touch the point! a proceeding which no one, who has a character to lose, would think of adopting. And even if this desperate step be taken, it will not answer, for the context proves that the Apostle is referring exclusively to the *prophetical* parts of Scripture.

The other text is from 2 Tim. III. 16: "All Scripture is given by inspiration and is *profitable*." &c.

But in order to derive any benefit from this text, the advocate of *plenary inspiration* must studiously conceal from his reader or hearer certain information which truth requires to be communicated. The word "is" being in *italics*, is admitted by our translators not to be in the original. The words of the text as it stands in the *received* Greek text are these: "All Scripture, given by inspiration, and is *profitable*, &c." Now the word "and" is not found in many of the oldest and most important manuscripts, and is believed by the most learned critics, such as Mill, for instance, to have been added purposely by a transcriber. The true original text, therefore, correctly translated, is this: "All scripture, given by inspiration, is profitable," &c. and it is accordingly so translated by the principal modern, as well as by all

Catholic critics. Grotius translates it thus, and his rendering is declared by Macknight to be "abundantly just," and Doddridge says the original will "undoubtedly bear it."

But even supposing that the original is truly represented in our common version—will any man rest such a doctrine as that of *plenary inspiration* upon this passage? Will any Protestant insist upon our receiving that doctrine, against such abundant testimony to the contrary, merely because the grammatical and literal construction of the text is supposed to express it? Does not the *grammatical and literal* construction of another text, "this is my body," require us equally to believe in transubstantiation?

But the grammatical construction of the passage, as it stands in our common version, *does not*, after all, express the doctrine of *plenary inspiration*. It merely ascribes inspiration, of *some sort*, without defining its nature or degree, to that portion of the bible then received as "scripture"—that is, to *those books* of the Old Testament regarded by the Jews as of the highest authority.

In concluding the consideration of this important subject, I would express the hope that your readers, whose patience has so long tolerated a theological discussion, will not have occasion to regret the space it has occupied, or the time it has consumed. May they never fear enquiry or be afraid of the truth, or shrink from a manly and honorable avowal and defence of it. Truth cannot injure a good cause. It is our duty to seek it constantly and earnestly, and to make it known whenever we have ascertained it, on every matter of general importance; and never to imagine that, by concealing it from the world, or keeping it locked up in our own minds, we shall subserve the interests of mankind. It is too common to deal with men as if the truth would harm them; as if it were really dangerous to propose and urge it. They whose peculiar office it is to search out and unfold spiritual truth, seem sometimes to be afraid to make known to others the results of their own studious inquiries, lest they should startle some time-hallowed prejudice, and with it the foundation of dearly cherished, errors in religious belief. With such teachers I can feel but little sympathy. Truth is better than error under all circumstances and *for every mind*. That charity which believes that error, of any kind, is as useful to those who adopt it in *sincerity*, as truth would be, or that the errors of some are to them really truths, while it covers a great deal of false reasoning, furnishes also a pretext for a great many sins of omission. Let us follow truth—it cannot lead us astray. Let us be zealous for truth—our zeal will be expended in a good cause. Let us contend for the truth—it is a glorious warfare, and all who engage in it with sincerity, candor, and singleness of heart, will be sure of a reward.

And now, Mr. Editor, in compliance with your wishes, and in accordance with my own inclinations, I again retire from the controversy. It was not of my seeking; and as I am not answerable for the unreasonable length to which it has been protracted, so I am not anxious to continue it to the whole extent of my privilege, but I relinquish cheerfully the claim which I might justly assert for several papers more.

In looking back over the course of the discussion, it cannot fail to strike the careful reader, that while my antagonist has deserted, one after another, every single position to which he had fled, not one statement made by me has been overthrown or even impugned.

The Unitarians have been the assailed party from the beginning; every kind of abuse and misrepresentation has been brought against us, every species of detraction and calumny has been accumulated from the Spirit of the Pilgrims, the Vice Chancellor's Court in England and the Howard Street Church in Salem, but in no instance has there been the least appearance of retaliation on our part.

And if any of my orthodox fellow-citizens have thought that they perceived in the language or the tone of my pieces the slightest indication of an unkind or disrespectful feeling towards them, I can assure them that either they have misunderstood me, or I have misrepresented myself. While no language can express the degree of my attachment to the principles of my christian faith; and while I consider it a sacred duty to vindicate, illustrate, and diffuse them on all proper occasions, and

particularly when they are held up to reproach, I hope and believe that it will always be my purpose and desire to cherish the sentiment of charity towards all other christians. But however far we succeed, or however much we fall short, individually, in exercising such a spirit, one thing is certain; charity is the great principle of the Unitarians, as a denomination; and we acknowledge ourselves false to our cause, if we do not cherish it towards all of every name.

But this spirit does pervade the Unitarian part of the community; and in proof of it I would venture the assertion that, if any one of our clergymen, let him be the most honored and admired of the whole denomination, should so far sink below the proprieties and decencies of civilized life, as to assail the personal, and intellectual characters of the orthodox in the style of the last 4th of July Address, such a strong and decided disapprobation would be *expressed*, as would leave no room to doubt our universal abhorrence of the outrage.

May such an occurrence never take place again among us; and while we entertain different speculative views on inferior points, and pursue the ends of religion by somewhat different methods, may the spirit of our common faith pervade our hearts, gradually influencing them to harmony, and guiding them to truth; and may that charity, which *vaunteth not itself*, and thinketh *and speaketh no evil*, so possess our souls while here on earth, that we may become prepared to dwell together in the perfect concord, peace, and love of the heavenly state.

UNITARIAN.

POSTSCRIPT.

The controversy here brought to a close was occasioned by an Address delivered by the Rev. George B. Cheever at the "Religious celebration of the 4th of July, 1833," in Salem. The Address was soon after given to the public through the press. It was abusive towards the Unitarians to a degree unparalleled even in the worst days of theological intolerance and bigotry.—Some time after its publication, it was highly commended by correspondents in the Salem Gazette, who professed to speak in the name of the orthodox denomination.

The articles written by a "Unitarian" are collected in this and the three previous pamphlets. The titles of these pamphlets, with a table of contents, and the dates of the several articles, are here given.

I.

"The charge of IGNORANCE and MISREPRESENTATION proved against Rev. GEORGE B. CHEEVER." pp. 16.

Sept. 24, Unitarian offers to prove that Mr. Cheever "quotes authors whom he never read."—Oct. 4, Unitarian repeats the offer more distinctly. Oct. 15, "Horsley" challenges Unitarian to the proof. Oct. 18, Unitarian proves that Mr. Cheever was ignorant of the theological character of "Dr. Chalmers," and quotes the writings of that author. Oct. 22, Unitarian proves that Mr. Cheever was ignorant of the theological character of "Ralph Cudworth," and presents specimens of his writings. Oct. 25, Unitarian vindicates the fame of Priestley, and Channing, and Howe, and Leighton, against the reproaches and the encomiums of Mr. Cheever, and concludes with a reference to the speech of Bradford Sumner, Esq. at Groton.

II.

"The charge of IGNORANCE and MISREPRESENTATION proved against A LOVER OF CUDWORTH AND TRUTH." pp. 24.

Nov. 8, Unitarian fixes the charge of misrepresentation upon "a Lover of Cudworth and Truth" (Mr. Cheever's assumed signature in the Gazette), and shews that he has added to ignorance of the character and sentiments of Cudworth, the folly of attempting to maintain his cause by mutilating the language of that author. The views of ARJUS and of the Fathers of the *three first centuries presented*, and the doctrine of the Unitarians concerning the PERSON of the SAVIOUR vindicated. Nov. 12, Cudworth's character illustrated by the opinions of the learned from his day to this, particularly by the testimonies of Robert Nelson, John Turner, Dr. William Webster, John Howe, and Sir James Mackintosh. Mr. Cheever's ludicrous use of Thomas Wise's authority. Nov. 15, Mr. Cheever's use of the name of Robert Hall exposed. Hall's eulogy upon Priestley. Calvin's views of the word "Trinity." Mr. Cheever's attempt to mislead the public by his allusion to the Birmingham Address. Orthodox eulogium upon Dr. Channing.—Mr. Cheever the aggressor in the controversy. Nov. 19, an account of the Unitarians in Salem. Characters of Dr. Channing and Professor Norton. Unitarian sentiments displayed in the writings of the former. Appeal to orthodox LAYMEN. Conclusion.

III.

"CHARITY supported by ORTHODOXY; Mr. Cheever CONVICTED of IGNORANCE and MISREPRESENTATION, and the UNITARIAN FAITH VINDICATED." pp. 72.

Dec. 20, Mr. Cheever challenged to produce a passage alleged by him to exist in Cudworth's writings. Dec. 27, Mr. Cheever proved to have altered the language of that author. Mr. Cheever's conduct disavowed by the orthodox. Dec. 31, Review of the Controversy. Mr. Cheever's letter to the Boston Recorder praising "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth," a violation of the rules of anonymous controversy. No longer permitted to wear the disguise of an anonymous signature. Mr. Cheever shown to have yielded the original point of the controversy.—Cudworth acknowledged to have been a Unitarian. Jan. 3, The Boston Recorder letter quoted, Mr. Cheever and "a Lover of Cudworth and Truth" the same. Jan. 7, Cudworth's opinions illustrated more at large. Testimony of Christian Examiner and Professor Norton. Mr. Cheever's use of word "WRAPRASCALE." Jan. 10, Mr. Cheever's violence, bigotry, and ignorance. His views of INSPIRATION. Coleridge's testimony. Jan. 17, Mr. Cheever's misrepresentations.

Channing and Cudworth on HUMAN NATURE, and on REGENERATION. Mr. Brazer vindicated. Jan. 21, Channing on the ATONEMENT. CENTRAL GALLOWS. Cudworth's views on the same subject. Jan. 24, TRINITY. Unitarians think more highly of Christ than Trinitarians. Upham's Letters on the Logos quoted. Texts of scripture quoted. Cudworth's views on the subject. Channing's views on the same. Jan. 28, Channing on REVIVALS, and on MISSIONARIES.—Channing and Calvin on the SABBATH. Channing and Cudworth on ETERNAL TORMENTS.—Unitarians and Universalists. Jan. 31, Channing's views of HEAVEN, HELL and SALVATION. Cudworth's views on the same. On the state of the *dead*. Mr. Cheever's Calvinistic use of "POODLE DOG." Feb. 4, Belsham. *Who* have called Christ a "sinner"? Dabney's Annotations. Mr. Cheever's method of quoting scripture. Feb. 7, Review of the Controversy. Cudworth's Creed. Mr. Cheever proved to be "a Lover of Cudworth and Truth." New school of young orthodox divines. Mr. Cheever INFALLIBLE. Concluded in the language of Cudworth.

IV.

"The CONCLUSION of the SALEM CONTROVERSY." pp. 30.

April 8, Mr. Cheever's Plagiarisms. Mr. Cheever answered. Mr. Cheever's *libel* on the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. Lady Hewley's funds. *Orthodoxy established by law*. Sir Launcelot Shadwell. Sir Edward Sugden. The old Presbyterian minister of Birmingham.—Farewell to Mr. Cheever. April 11, Arguments of Spirit of Pilgrims repeated. German Theology. Eachard's "contempt of the Clergy." Sir Jonah Barrington. Orthodox "Scavenger's carts." PLENARY INSPIRATION. Evangelical accounts of the morning of the Resurrection.—PERPETUITY of the LORD'S SUPPER. April 15, Discrepancies reconciled. Importance of Unitarian views of inspiration. Michaelis's views. Rebuke of the sentiment "*Plenary inspiration or no Bible*." April 18, The TRUE doctrine of INSPIRATION stated. Maintained by Paley, Burnet, Bishop Tomline, Michaelis, Herbert Marsh, Warburton, Tillotson, and others. Scripture proof. Importance of Truth. CONCLUSION.

N. B. In an early stage of the discussion, a controversy was carried on in the Gazette, principally on the subject of *Inspiration*, between two writers who subscribed themselves "Sigma," and "a grain of Mustard seed."

The sentiments advanced by "Sigma" have been repeated by "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth," and a part of the *last* article (April 18) signed "Unitarian," was prepared by "a grain of Mustard seed" (see pamphlet, III. p. 24). The remainder of that article, and all the other articles that have appeared in the Salem Gazette since August, 1833, with the signature "Unitarian" have been the productions of one and the same author.

Only one of the series of articles, signed "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth" was published in a pamphlet form and that as has been justly remarked, (see "The Unitarian" Vol. I. No. 4.) was so far altered as to be of no use or interest in illustrating the course of the controversy as it occurred in the Salem Gazette.

April 22, 1834.

SALEM GAZETTE EXTRA.

Notice to the readers of the Salem Gazette.

The articles published in the Salem Gazette, with the signature "Unitarian," have been collected into pamphlets. The title of the last of these pamphlets will be seen by referring to the advertising columns of the paper which encloses this notice. At the end of the said pamphlet, the reader will find a *table of contents* which comprehends the articles of "Unitarian" from the beginning to the end of the controversy. In these pamphlets an answer will be found to all that has been written, both *ordinary*, and *extra-ordinary*, by "Mr. Cheever, AND a Lover of Godworth and Truth"

In reference to the "Extra," circulated with the last Gazette, I would briefly observe that, if its "unfortunate" author should ever again appear in print, and undertake to add 'to his various publications,' it will be advisable, in order to prevent 'mistakes' to place *quotation marks* at the beginning and end of all that may be borrowed from other writers!

Mr. Cheever is already sufficiently celebrated for his *quotations*; he has now sought to distinguish himself in a new field of literary fame. He has commenced *lexicographer*, and says that '*Peccable*' means '*not without sin*!' When the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says of the Saviour 'For in that he himself hath *suffered being tempted*, he is able to succour them that are tempted,' we have always supposed that he intended to convey the idea that our Lord was himself susceptible of those influences which are permitted to lead us into sin, and that, although he resisted them with perfect success, he is thereby enabled to feel for us in our struggles against temptation. But it seems from Mr. Cheever, that if the Saviour was liable to sin, or could experience temptation, that is if he was '*peccable*,' he was therefore '*not without sin*.' So we must class the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews with Calvin and Luther and other orthodox writers, who have the exclusive credit of having called the Saviour an '*actual sinner*!'

Although Mr. Cheever does not seem to be aware of the fact, every reader of the Gazette, I presume, well knows that when the malignant enemies of our Lord accused him of making himself equal with God, he

did, most distinctly, deny, overthrow, and refute the absurd and malicious calumny. The Saviour always ascribed supremacy to the Father. 'Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God.' 'My Father is GREATER than I.' 'The Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works,' &c.

The following is one of Mr. Cheever's declarations.

'I am induced to stand upon this ground, in respect of the divine inspiration of every part of the scriptures; because the sacred writers, for themselves, and for each other, expressly and constantly claim it.'

Compare with this the declarations of the Apostle Paul.

"But to the rest speak I, not the Lord."—1 Cor. vii. 12.

"That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord." 2 Cor. xi. 17.

The following will serve as specimens of Mr. Cheever's method of quoting the Bible.

Cheever. "We speak as of God." 2 Cor. ii. 17.

BIBLE. "But as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." 2 Cor. ii. 17.

Cheever. "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." 1 Cor. ii. 13.

BIBLE. "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." 1 Cor. ii. 13.

Why did Mr. Cheever add what I have printed in capitals? Has he received a commission to amend and alter what has already been expressed in language selected and constructed by the direct operation of the Spirit of God?

But I shall not undertake the interminable task of exposing all the unfair quotations contained in the 'twelve columns.' Any one who places confidence in Mr. Cheever's quotations from Unitarian writers, is willing to be deceived, and rejoices in calumny, and for such a person I do not pretend to write. When I shall have rectified the misrepresentations given in the 'extra' of Doddridge's views of inspiration, I shall have done with that curious production.—Every thing else it contains sufficiently refutes and rebukes itself.

Mr. Cheever extracts a passage from Doddridge's "Dissertation on Inspiration," but he takes care not to print the first part of the paragraph, in which it is acknowledged that there are *errors* in our copies of the scriptures; and he also takes good care to stop before he reaches the sentence in which Doddridge pronounces the view of *inspiration*, recently urged upon us in the *Gazette* as the only alternative of infidelity, one which he thinks it 'not prudent,' and certainly 'not necessary to assert!' Mr. Cheever is indeed utterly *incorrigible* as a *quoter*.

Doddridge's 'Lectures' were drawn up with the greatest care, were made the basis of his instructions to his theological pupils, and, as they were published after his death in compliance with a *clause in his will* to that effect, we must consider them as exhibiting his most mature and solemn judgment upon the topics of which they treat. In these 'Lectures' he declares 'that the proof we have of the inspiration of the New Testament, is on the whole considerably greater than that which we have of the inspiration of the Old.' He also 'readily allows that there was a great variety in the degree of inspiration in the different books and passages of the Old Testament.'—And when the reader shall have examined the following passage he will see still more clearly, if possible, than before, what folly it is to trust to Mr. Cheever in reference to a matter of fact.

"There is a great deal of reason to believe, that many things contained in the New Testament were written by an inspiration of *suggestion*; since the apostles sometimes expressly assert that they received what they wrote by *revelation from Christ*; and this is peculiarly applicable to the prophetic part of their writings; compare *Eph. iii. 3, 5. Gal. i. 12. 1 Cor. ii. 10, &c. xi. 23.* It is also exceedingly probable that they were frequently instructed in an extraordinary manner, not only as to the *matter* about which they wrote, but likewise as to the *language* they should use, *1 Cor. ii. 13.* and whoever peruses their writings attentively, will find they frequently express themselves, even when they wrote upon particular occa-

sions, in phrases of such latitude and extent as would make their writings abundantly more useful to *Christians* in all succeeding ages, than they could have been, had they confined themselves closely to the particular occasion, as some who have paraphrased their writings have done: a circumstance in which it is very probable they had a particular divine direction, and upon observing which the just interpretation of their writings will greatly depend. But it does not seem reasonable to believe, that *every word* which the apostles wrote was dictated to them by an immediate revelation; for (as was before observed) there are not only many things which they might have written without such a revelation, but moreover on such an hypothesis there could have been no room at all for such a distinction as the apostle makes, *1 Cor. vii. 10, 12, 25,* between what *he* and what *the Lord* says: nor could we suppose that, if this had been the case, they would ever have quoted the words of the Old Testament otherwise than exactly as they were written, or that they could ever have spoken with that uncertainty with which they sometimes express themselves as to some future events, *1 Cor. xvi. 5, 6.* compared with *2 Cor. i. 15–17. Rom. xv. 24, 25,* compare also *1 Cor. i. 14, 16. iv. 19. xvi. 7. Phil. ii. 19, 23, 24. 1 Tim. iii. 14, 15. 2 John ver. 12. 3 John ver. 14.* It must also be acknowledged, that there are some *imperfections* and some *peculiarities of style*, which probably there would not have been, had the apostles always written by an inspiration of suggestion: yet this is upon the whole no dishonor to the sacred scriptures: since by this means they are more adapted to answer their general end, as containing surer marks of their genuineness, and laying open the heart and character of the persons by whom they were written more effectually than they could have done, had these writers been merely the organs of the Holy Ghost, in SUCH A MANNER AS SOME HAVE SUPPOSED."—*Doddridge's Lectures*, vol. 2, p. 65.

Our views are expressed with absolute exactness in this extract. Are those, who pronounce us *infidels*, on account of these views, ready to fix the same presumptuous and calumnious accusation upon the pure and consecrated fame of PHILIP DODDRIDGE?

UNITARIAN.

SALEM GAZETTE EXTRA.

Friday, May 9, 1834.

Communication.

For the Salem Gazette.

In following up Mr. Cheever in another Extra, I wish not to be misunderstood. Some surprise has been expressed that I continue to take any further notice of that individual. Whether he is worthy of notice or not, is a question of no sort of interest to me, and I should be sorry to have to give an opinion on the subject; but so long as he perseveres in making false statements, in the Gazette, or in an Extra to the Gazette, my duty to the cause of truth will constrain me to expose him, and he will find himself steadily pursued. There is one way in which he can secure the *last word*. Let him print an Extra which shall contain no misstatement, no misrepresentation, and no misquotation, and I can promise him that it will not be answered by me.

Every single point of the discussion, in its original form, has now been surrendered. For a long time Mr. Cheever and his friends most indignantly and stoutly denied the principal charge alleged against him, which was, in substance, that he *quoted* authors without *reading* them. They were quite confident that on this point they were secure; for, as they themselves, with the most amusing simplicity,

observed, if the charge were *true*, it could not be *proved*. But it is one of the most commendable traits of Mr. Cheever, as a controversialist, that he always *confesses* what might not otherwise easily be proved. In the Extra of Tuesday, he actually acknowledges that he quotes the BIBLE itself at *second hand*!

Mr. Cheever seems to think that it is very wrong, and shockingly "malignant," to undertake to "evade the POWER" of his arguments, or as the Boston Recorder Letter has it, his "powerful" arguments, by exposing the fraudulent misquotations upon which they rest. Now it seems to me that when an argument professes to be built upon quotations, to show that the quotations are false, is the best way in the world to bring the argument to the ground.

But Mr. Cheever acknowledges that certain texts of scripture were *altered* as they appeared in his Extra. He throws the blame, however, upon Dr. Woods. Afterwards he actually justifies the alteration on the ground that the *sense* remained the same. Without admitting that the *sense* remained the same, (for it did not,) what, I ask, can be expected of a writer, who has such a passion for mutilating quotations, such a mere abstract love for the operation, as to contemplate with satisfaction an alteration of the language of

scripture, even when nothing is gained by the alteration? (See my third pamphlet, page 43.) That man must have a most amazing development both of *destructiveness* and *constructiveness*, in his cerebral organs, who in quoting scripture itself, takes absolute pleasure in tearing a text into fragments, and then putting it together in a new arrangement! This habit of altering texts is a very dangerous one, and when a writer has been once detected in indulging it, or has confessed that he approves of it, it will be well for him to be extremely careful in future how he charges others with a want of reverence for the word of God.

Mr. Cheever has strung together, in his usual manner, the broken remnants of several mutilated sentences, violently extracted from Doddridge's 'Dissertation on Inspiration.' In this dissertation, the author admits that the Scriptural writers frequently used only their own natural faculties; he also rejects the sentiment that the whole bible was dictated by the spirit of God. It is a curious fact that he adduces against the belief of such a dictation, "the stale and silly objection, urged by all infidels from time immemorial, against inspiration, and not needing now for the millionth time to be refuted, from 2 Tim. iv. 13, in regard to Paul's cloak and parchment." (See Mr. Cheever's first Extra.) In this very tract Doddridge, "stale and silly infidel" as he was, also adduces, to the same purpose, Paul's advice to Timothy "to mingle a little wine with his water."

He maintains, however, that the Scriptural writers, when writing by the use of their natural faculties only, were *constantly superintended*, so as to be prevented from committing *any error*. But he acknowledges, notwithstanding, that there are *errors* in our Scriptures, and he gets over the difficulty, by recommending an *arbitrary alteration* of "a word or two" in such cases!

☞ Attached to the Dissertation is a Postscript, from which Mr. Cheever has also quoted. In this Postscript Doddridge gives notice of his intention to study the subject still more carefully, to review the arguments frequently, and finally to lay the results of his "reading, conversation, or med-

itation" before the public in his "Theological Lectures."

My last extra contained the results of his matured reflections on the subject, and they were precisely the views entertained by Unitarians. An "entire paragraph" was there given from Doddridge's "Lectures", the last he ever wrote on the question of Inspiration, extracted from a work which proceeded, as it were, from his death-bed, and published in pursuance of his *last will and testament*. But Mr. Cheever, with this very passage before his eyes, proclaiming, as it does, Doddridge's solemn and final testimony in favor of our opinions, pronounces it "most base" in me to use the name of this "venerated Orthodox writer." I shall not retort the language he has applied to me; it will need no promptings to enable every honorable mind to fix it where it rightly belongs.

It seems that Mr. Cheever has at length opened his eyes to a true view of the position into which he has brought himself.—The general "outcry" of society against his abusive and intolerant course has reached his ears. It is strange indeed that he did not foresee the consequences of his conduct. It is evident that he fancies that he knows more on the subject of religion than any body else. In his last Extra, for instance, he says that he knows that Unitarianism "is fraught with ruin to the soul, and excludes all possibility of salvation." He ought to have remembered that other men have minds as well as himself, and that in order to communicate his extraordinary and supernatural *knowledge* to them, it would be necessary in the first place to prove his preeminent authority to *teach*, and to accompany his instructions with clear and convincing *evidences* and *reasons*.—Without condescending to use these means, the wisest of men cannot hope to impart their wisdom to others. Unitarian Christians have been conducted to their present opinions by the application of their faculties to the word of God—they *believe most firmly and sacredly that their doctrines are taught by the Bible*. They are allowed to be as intelligent and well informed, and every way as capable of judging on this subject as Mr. Cheever, or his followers. And any attempts to drive them from their faith by calumnies upon their writers, or

imputations upon their christian sincerity, or by denying them the christian name, will meet with nothing but pity and contempt from them, and indignation and abhorrence from all reflecting and fair-minded men of every other denomination. Whoever would make "earnest efforts for their conversion" must address them with civility and kindness—must advance clear and cogent arguments drawn from scripture and reason—must not pretend to INFALLIBLE KNOWLEDGE on the questions at issue,—must not mutilate the language of authors—must read the books he cites—must have a *respectable* acquaintance at least with the most distinguished writers and authorities in theology—and must be very careful not to draw his *texts of scripture* from either Dr. Woods, or *Bp. Wilson*.—It is bad enough to *quote* "Ralph Cudworth" without *reading* him, but when such a wonderful reformer as Mr Cheever quotes the BIBLE without reading it, he will probably have to "continue his efforts" a *very long time indeed* before he can persuade the people of "such a place as Salem" to surrender up *to him*, their own reason, and consciences, and christian liberty.

In the September number of the Christian Examiner for 1830, there is an article which has been repeatedly misrepresented, in a most shameful manner, by Mr. Cheever. Near the close of the article there is a paragraph, which begins with these words: "We do *not* think that the Old Testament, *read with understanding*, encourages this kind of superstition." The writer then proceeds to show that it does not, and the paragraph concludes with the following sentence:

"While therefore we cannot charge the writers of the Old Testament with giving wrong impressions, it is evident that superstition has found its strong hold in the Hebrew scriptures, and can never be dislodged till those remarkable writings, with their time and circumstance, spirit and letter, are better and more generally understood."

The next paragraph commences thus:

"But we let these things pass in order to show how entirely readers of the Old Testament lose the consolations of religion. The Hebrew faith never taught the immortality of the soul. Doubtless there were intimations of this truth before Christianity. But the first clear, full, and convincing disclosure of a future ex-

istence, was made by him who died and rose again."

The next paragraph is thus introduced:

"Other instances might be pointed out in which men go to the Old Testament for that instruction which it was never meant to afford them, and return without benefit, though not always without injury from that word of truth which might have enlightened and improved them, had they read it without the veil on their hearts. But we may trace the effect of this misuse of it in the religious spirit of the present day."

The article concludes with the following paragraph:

"Let no one charge us with undervaluing the Old Testament, because we say of it that it does not contain Christianity, and that men do wrong to go to it to learn the duties, feelings and consolations of the Christian Religion. Deny it who can! We acknowledge the grandeur of its inspirations, the sublimity of its visions of God. We love the plaintive music of its hymns. We feel the greatness of the prophets who sent a gleam of light down into future ages, seeing what none beside could see, hearing what others could not hear. We bow with reverence to all those mighty men, who in their successive ages lifted up the banner of religion and of God. Still we must say, that the Hebrew faith is not Christianity; it was only the preparation, which, when that which was perfect came, was ready to be done away."

Now let the reader endeavor to pick out of the several sentences I have adduced from the article of Sept. 1830, the following paragraph fabricated and represented by Mr. Cheever as a quotation from Unitarian writers. The employment would be curious and amusing did it not bring to light a degree of unfairness, and deception, and misrepresentation, which is enough to distress and sicken every heart.

"Superstition has found its strong hold in the Hebrew Scriptures."—"Readers of the Old Testament lose the consolations of religion."—"Men go to the Old Testament for that instruction *which it was never meant to afford them*, and return without benefit, though *not always without injury*."—"It does not contain Christianity, and men do *wrong* to go to it to learn the duties, feelings, and consolations of the Christian Religion."—It is "mixed with the doubtfulness of old traditions, and with *systems of SUPERANNUATED ERRORS*."

The reader will have been able to collect the whole paragraph, it is probable, with the exception of the last clause. What,

then, will be his amazement when he is told that that very clause is a *fragment of a sentence* taken from the middle of a paragraph, in another article, written by another person, published *four years before* in the same Examiner!

This then is a specimen of Mr. Cheever's method of proving his charges against Unitarians, by quoting their authors.

We have reason to be grateful that the system of slander adopted and countenanced by those who ought to have known better, is at last made to shew its own wickedness and weakness by being brought to the tribunal of the public press. And we call upon those of our orthodox fellow citizens who have been deceived by the calumnies which have so industriously and perseveringly been poured out through the medium of tracts, and discourses from the pulpit, and exhortations in the vestry, and dark insinuations in private, to frown upon all such malignant defamation in future, and, while they enjoy their own sentiments in their own way, to protect the Unitarians from outrage and abuse on the part of those whom they contribute to support.

☞ The distinction has often been stated by Unitarian writers (and one would think it clear and obvious enough to be universally acknowledged) that the *Bible is not a revelation, but the record of a revelation*. In his last extra, as repeatedly before, Mr. Cheever has quoted the former part of this distinction "the Bible is not a revelation" as an absolute, complete, and independent proposition, and has represented it as an opinion entertained by Unitarians.

Now I would ask every fairminded and upright man or woman of the Howard Street Church what they would think of a person who should go into court, and in giving testimony under oath, make such a misrepresentation as this? Would they not consider it a gross and wicked suppression and perversion of the truth? What then will they think—what will they say—what will they do, when they see their Pastor convicted of bearing such false testimony, as this, in public and in print, against their neighbors and friends and fellow christians? I would respectfully remind them that for these things so long as they countenance or tolerate them, they are re-

sponsible, and will be held to answer before a just community, at the tribunal of their own consciences, and at the bar of God.

Surely it is not necessary for me to suggest to my readers in general the terms, by which Mr. Cheever's method of quoting Unitarian writers should be characterized. If any one, however, wishes to give utterance to the feelings of indignation which honorable minds must experience, he need not be at a loss for words. He will find almost all the epithets, expressive of contempt, disgust, and abhorrence, which the language affords, scattered with indiscriminate profusion over Mr. Cheever's two last extras.

If "A Lover of Cudworth and Truth" is not satisfied with the displays, he has already made of "Mr. Cheever's fearless and honorable conduct" and wishes by publishing more extras to continue "to make thorough work in this controversy" with "Mr Cheever's literary reputation," I would assure him, that, if he will be so kind as to attach the proper *references* to his quotations, it will give me no trouble at all to convict him of "ignorance and misrepresentation" at every step in his progress.

But, if he has any regard for "Mr. Cheever" I would seriously and most sincerely advise him to stop, and consider his ways. He has gained nothing, as yet, as he himself seems to have ascertained, but "obloquy and odium" and the general "outcry" of the community. Every fresh attempt to fix the charge of infidelity upon the Unitarians, has only deepened his own disgrace, and involved him in fresh disaster. The public verdict is pronounced against him, in more decided tones, every time he appeals to them. But any advice from me to Mr. Cheever will be as ungraciously received, as it is faithfully and sincerely given, and I refrain.

Let us rejoice that the cause of charity still continues in the ascendant. Let the orthodox denomination be honored and applauded for their fidelity to that cause; and let all those persons who have *secretly* encouraged Mr. Cheever, be thankful that they have had wit enough not to commit themselves so far, as to become sharers of his irretrievable fortunes.

UNITARIAN.



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